St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio

commonweal

The Editors
SOVIET REALITIES
CANON LAW '83

$1.25
FEBRUARY 11, 1983

DAVID K. O'ROURKE

REVOLUTION & ALIENATION IN THE AMERICAN CHURCH

PETER STEINFELS

Does capitalism equal pluralism equal democracy?

FRANK McCONNELL, MARIE AUGUSTA NEAL

THE SCREENING OF AMERICA

THE 98th CONGRESS • *What do superpowers want?* • ANNA FREUD • *John Henry Newman* • WILLIAM BLAKE • *How to fix the economy without really trying* • MAXIMILIAN KOLBE & ANTI-SEMITISM • *Alice Walker* • 'COUP DE TORCHON'

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Correspondence

Papal outrage?

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Abigail McCarthy writes, December 17, "The pope met (it would seem unwisely) with Arafat."

In spite of the many attempts to quibble about its meaning, and to dilute its import the meeting had strong political and moral implications. The pope met Arafat immediately after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and the killing of immense numbers of people, to show his abhorrence of this wanton destruction, and the waging of unlimited war not only against the PLO, but a mostly unarmed civilian population. He was undoubtedly outraged, as was most of mankind, by this carnage, done with American equipment and monies.

There are those who set themselves to ignore this slaughter, or to excuse it, or even to justify it. He did not. He justly took a moral stand against such enormous destruction in the name of selfish and unbridled national interest.

JOHN BRANIGAN

Party authority

Columbus, Ohio

To the Editors: Your lead editorial for December 17, "Getting Out the Vote," contains some splendid thoughts, with which I agree. What the TV networks may think is of no consequence.

They won't like my notions on the subject of presidential selection either, and I don't really expect them to be accepted, but without something approaching them, I fear the 24-hour-Sunday idea won't really do much good.

Anyhow, here are my suggestions:

(1) Any person who "runs" for the office or announces his availability prior to a national party convention should be automatically disqualified.

(2) There should be no primary elections — anywhere.

(3) Candidates should be selected at national party conventions to be held right after Labor Day in the election year.

(4) Delegates to those conventions should be active politicians, serving by reason of their positions as members of both houses of Congress, governors of the states, mayors of cities, say over 200,000, and chairmen of state and national committees. They are the ones who know one another's competence, and that of non-delegates, and have some notion of their electability.

(5) During the ensuing eight weeks of campaigning free TV time should be afforded to all nominees.

I feel that our country has suffered by the decline in party authority and responsibility, and that, because of that gap, money given to individuals has far too much to say about who is chosen and how he behaves in office. Elizabeth Drew's two-part article in the *New Yorker* has a good deal to say on this point.

What a relief it would be to be spared the views of "reporters" at Iowa caucuses or from the January snows of New Hampshire. We'd not have to confront a travesty such as the joint TV appearance of several ambitious fellows all hoping for a primary victory somewhere.

This may indicate a return to the much maligned "smoke-filled room," but the tedious, drawn-out "democratization" approach has not produced candidates of demonstrably superior caliber than the old method. It's quite likely, too, that we'd not see relative amateurs running *against* the very government they are seeking to head.

Of course the TV folks won't like it, and, I suspect, neither will the "print media." After all, even *Commonweal*, in December 1982, discusses the 1984 election in "Life After Teddy." Good grief!

EDWARD H. LAYLIN

Offensive analogy

Davenport, Iowa

To the Editors: As a long-time supporter of *Commonweal* and an admirer of its unstinting dedication to an open and honest exchange of ideas, I was especially pained and dismayed to read "Not Exactly A Pilgrimage," Editor James O'Gara's article on the Middle East [Dec. 17]. I enjoy being challenged. I do not appreciate being insulted. I welcome controversy. I have great disdain for offensive remarks, innuendos, and false accusations.

To state that in present-day Israel "the Jews are the Romans" is obscene. To affirm that "the Palestinians on the West Bank fill the role of the Jews in Jesus's time" is outrageous. The analogy is an insult to my people. One need not dwell on its historical implications and associations.

In the field of biblical interpretation the article would stand as a prime example of eisegesis. This is an approach where an idea, a belief, a thought, or position is stated first and then the text is "used" as supporting evidence. Such an approach is not accepted as a legitimate means of interpreting the Bible. It should not be tolerated in the field of journalism.

Throughout the article there is no reference to past history, to events that led to specific actions. In the Middle East, especially, an evaluation based on a tourist's view of the current scene is far from adequate.

It is hard to believe that Mr. O'Gara does not understand the circumstances under which present-day Jordan came into being or that he is not familiar with the Palestine National Covenant. Yet his opinion of King Hussein and Crown Prince Hassan, his negative view of Begin Cabinet member Jousef Bourg and his equation of the P.L.O. with Palestinians in general raise some interesting questions about his knowledge of the area.

(Continued on page 94)

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mi. 48106 and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Micro-Photo Division, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, Ohio 44691. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Copyright © 1983 Commonweal Publishing Co.

Illustrations: Cover, pp. 79, 87, 88, Mitro, *Ta Nea*, Greece; p. 71, Rita Corbin; p. 75, Padry, *Le Herisson*, Paris; p. 78, Edward Rice; p. 81, Whittemore, Rothco; p. 82, Ross, Rothco.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

Volume CX, Number 3

Correspondence 66

Editorials 67

Changing the rules: *Jeremiah Baruch* 71

Her father's daughter: *Jean Bethke Elshtain* 72

How to fix the economy without really trying: *Eugene Schlossberger* 73

What do they want?: *Thomas Powers* 74

Revolution & alienation in the American church: *David K. O'Rourke* 76

Does capitalism=pluralism=democracy?: *Peter Steinfels* 79

Media: *Frank McConnell* 85

Screen: *Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr.* 86

Books

Media / The Electronic Giant / Sign Off / Media and the American Mind from Morse to McLuhan / The TV Ritual / Media Unbound / Broadcast Journalism: *Marie Augusta Neal* 87

John Henry Newman: *Clyde F. Crews* 90

The Human Face of God: *Leonard W. Deen* 91

The Color Purple: *Elizabeth Bartelme* 93

Staff

Editor: James O'Gara
Executive Editor: Peter Steinfels
Assistant Editor: David Toolan
Editorial Assistant: Anne Robertson
Movies: Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr.
Poetry: Rosemary Deen, Marie Ponsot
Staff: Karen F. Silva, Harriette Balsky, Sheila Tanksley
Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor
Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

Commonweal, A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly, except monthly Christmas-New Year's and July and August, by Commonweal Publishing Co., 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016. Telephone: (212) MU 3-2042. Single copy, $1.25. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $24; Canada, $26; foreign, $29. Special two-year rate: U.S., $43; Canada, $47; foreign, $53. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank.

commonweal

WISHING WON'T MAKE IT SO

I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma. —Sir Winston Churchill
Oct. 1, 1939

THINGS HAVE NOT changed much since Winston Churchill uttered those words. Russian xenophobia discourages close scrutiny by outsiders, and Western estimates of Soviet reality often turn out to be based on completely mistaken assumptions. That now seems to be the case with the fundamental attitude underlying the stance of the Reagan administration toward the USSR. Led by the president himself, administration theorists have based their policies on the assumption that the Soviet Union is in a well nigh desperate economic condition. According to this view, either the Soviet Union must yield clear military supremacy to the U.S. or the U.S. can push the USSR into economic collapse by forcing it into an escalated arms race which that nation cannot afford. Such a goal, of course, raises a host of unanswered and perhaps unanswerable questions. Might not the prospect of an impending economic collapse provoke the Soviet leadership into last-gap military adventurism in an effort to save themselves? What would actually happen inside Russia in the event of a national collapse? Would the prospects for world peace be advanced or set back by such an event? Such questions remain to be explored. But in any case a lengthy analysis of the Soviet economy recently done for the Joint Economic Committee of Congress by the Central Intelligence Agency challenges the assumption that the economy of the USSR is in such precarious condition. Although the increase in the Soviet gross national product has dipped in recent years, due in some measure to poor harvests, the Russian GNP has nonetheless grown at an average rate of 4.8 percent in Western terms over the last three decades. Noting that many commentators had argued that the Soviet economy was in serious trouble and susceptible to Western pressure, Representative Henry S. Reuss, the respected chairman of the joint committee, commented that on the basis of this 401-page CIA study, such conclusions were unwarranted. As he put it, "This important study helps put into perspective for Americans the fact that the USSR, far from being on the verge of collapse, has experienced major growth."

Some other specific findings of the report:

• Total Soviet military expenditures amounted to 11 to 13 percent of the gross national product in 1970, and since then have increased at just above the average annual rate of GNP growth. This means that the share of Soviet GNP devoted to military spending has increased slightly over the years. U.S. military spending, on the other hand, dropped from 7.4 percent of the GNP in 1970 to 5.2 percent in 1981. (This is not as alarming as it may first appear: the Soviet gross national product in 1982 was calculated to be $1.6 trillion or $6000 per capita, which is roughly only 55

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

percent of the American gross national product. In other words, we can spend as much as or more than the Soviets on arms while still spending a smaller percentage of our gross national product.)

• Contrary to many observers, the Soviet standard of living has increased rapidly over the last thirty years; real consumption per capita rose at an annual rate of 3.5 percent and thus tripled in that period. Again this growth rate has declined in recent years, and living standards still remain well below those of the United States, Japan, and most of Europe, both East and West. The greatest problem inside the USSR is housing, with "per capita living space in urban areas in 1980 still remaining below the minimum norm for health and decency set by the government in 1928."

• Although the growth in food supplies has been low, "the quality of the diet has nonetheless improved greatly, shifting toward a pattern of less reliance on bread and potatoes and more reliance on meat and dairy products — a shift typical of other countries as per capita income shifts." Again this move toward more abundance and variety on Soviet dinner tables slowed in recent Brezhnev years, something new leader Andropov will undoubtedly have to worry about.

• A striking finding of the CIA study and one that goes directly counter to the Reagan folk wisdom: Soviet trade with the West amounts to only 5 percent of the Russian GNP, and the Soviet ability to live without imports is far greater than had been theorized in this country. Thus these findings seem to support those analysts who continue to contend that American trade embargoes against the Soviet Union have only limited effects and hence to argue against the policy of the Reagan administration, which has sought to tighten Western controls on non-strategic trade in order to bring pressure on Moscow — a policy that often brought conflict with our European allies and with U.S. businessmen.

According to the report, the Soviet Union has used trade with the West to help modernize its economy, and food imports are important in maintaining a "quality diet," primarily by using imported grain as feed for meat production. Nonetheless, said Henry Rowen, chairman of the CIA's National Intelligence Council, "despite the large-scale expansion in agricultural imports, the Soviet Union remains basically self-sufficient with respect to food," with the average Soviet citizen getting about the same number of calories as the U.S. citizen. Imports from the West, Mr. Rowen said, "can play an important role in relieving critical shortages, spurring technological progress, and generally improving Soviet economic performance." But he added, "The ability of the Soviet economy to remain viable in the absence of imports is much greater than that of most, possibly all, other industrialized economies. Consequently, the susceptibility of the Soviet Union to economic leverage tends to be limited."

In short, while it seems to be true that the Russians have had their economic problems in the last few years — who has not? — it still seems to be very clear that the Soviet economy is a long way from being on its last legs. Said Mr. Rowen: "In fact, we do not consider an economic 'collapse' — a sudden and sustained decline in the GNP — even a remote possibility."

The CIA is not infallible, of course, and the findings of this massive study are far from suggesting that the Soviet Union is anywhere close to being an admirable model for other countries to follow, even on narrow economic grounds. The flaws in the Soviet system come through plainly. Nonetheless, it seems plain enough that any hope entertained by U.S. officials that economic pressure can achieve a Soviet collapse in the foreseeable future is illusory. Whatever its appeal as platform rhetoric, there is no point in basing foreign policy on wishful thinking.

TRUTH & SAINTHOOD

Has the Catholic church just canonized a "rabid anti-Semite"? That charge was leveled in an article published last fall in the London *Jewish Chronicle* and reprinted here in the *Jewish Week* on October 22, 1982, shortly after the canonization of Father Maximilian Kolbe, the Polish priest who was brutally starved and then lethally injected in a cellblock at Auschwitz after volunteering to take the place of a Polish soldier, a married man with children, who had been condemned to execution. An Austrian monthly *Wiener Tagebuch* had made similar charges last April, in anticipation of Father Kolbe's canonization. Those accusations were reported by the *St. Louis Jewish Light* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* stirring up a local debate in their own pages as well as in the Catholic *St. Louis Review*. Eventually the *New York Times* printed a report from Rome which quoted a number of Father Kolbe's statements containing anti-Semitic stereotypes; these were matched with what read, to us at least, as rather lame explanations provided by Kolbe's defenders. The *Times* quotes, in turn, were the basis for a column in the January 15 *Nation* in which Christopher Hitchens, the *Nation*'s Washington correspondent, said that Kolbe had been "stoking the very oven in which he was to perish" and was "a man who really belonged in the Inquisition." The same quotes were also the basis for a much more measured column by Richard Cohen in the December 14 *Washington Post*. And the same news stories are obviously the sources for critical remarks on Kolbe appearing in the latest issue of the *New York Review of Books*.

There are several immediate reactions to these accusations that are natural — and unfortunate. Knowing that Father Kolbe courageously bore up under torture, willingly provided food, clothing, fuel, and sick care for perhaps two thousand Jewish refugees at his friary following the German invasion of Poland, and finally gave up his life for another Pole, one is tempted either to vexation or defensiveness. Why bring up *this*? Wasn't Kolbe only reflecting his times and milieu? Didn't he warn his colleagues against going too far in attacking Jews lest all possibility be lost to convert them?

But knowing how deeply implicated Christians are in the making of the Holocaust, and how often the kind of defensiveness just mentioned has prevented genuine self-examination, one is also tempted to acquiesce immediately in whatever

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

charges of anti-Semitism are put forth.

We believe it better to sift through the Kolbe case calmly, unafraid to admit culpability if called for and to make distinctions when necessary:

1. It is clear that at least some of the accusations against Father Kolbe are false. Two scholars, Daniel L. Schlafly, Jr., an Eastern European historian at St. Louis University, and Warren Green, director of the St. Louis Center for Holocaust Studies, examined the report in the *Wiener Tagebuch* and found it rife with error. The Austrian journal stated, for example, that the anti-Semitism of the Polish clergy reached such a pitch that the Warsaw government had complained to the Vatican about it in August, 1938, specifically mentioning Father Kolbe. No such complaint has, in fact, been found. The Austrian journal juxtaposes a quotation from a Jesuit journal in such a way as to link it, without any foundation, to Kolbe. The one example it provides of anti-Semitic rhetoric from a publication Kolbe had founded actually appeared when Kolbe was in the middle of a six-year missionary endeavor in Asia.

Schlafly and Green have also surveyed the extent letters, articles, radio sermons, notes, etc., of Father Kolbe's. Of 1,006 letters, only 14 refer to Jews at all; of 396 other writings, only 16 refer to Jews. Only a handful of these treat of Jews at any length. And of these 31 references, perhaps nine were favorable toward Jews or urged moderation in Catholic criticism of Jews. This is hardly the output of a "rabid anti-Semite" or a person "notorious . . . for his anti-Semitic activities." The fact is, as Schlafly and Green testify, Kolbe's writings contain "few references to contemporary political, social, economic, cultural, or secular questions" at all.

2. Other charges against Father Kolbe remain unsettled. What was the character of the publications he founded and over which he exercised some degree of control, even when his editorship became nominal? Were they, as the *Jewish Chronicle* says, "a popular anti-Semitic press"? Did they conduct "endless tirades against the Jewish community," as the *Wiener Tagebuch* wrote? Did they maintain, as the *New York Review of Books* writer states (echoing the *Jewish Chronicle* almost word for word), "a relentless anti-Semitic campaign"? Did Father Kolbe allow others to do what he personally did not do? These are legitimate questions. So far, neither Father Kolbe's accusers nor his defenders have offered the kind of evidence that could answer them one way or the other.

3. Although Maximilian Kolbe was by no means the virulent anti-Semite his accusers suggest, there is no denying the anti-Semitic character of some of his beliefs and remarks. Plainly and simply, Kolbe was a believer in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and in the existence of a Communist-Freemason-Zionist conspiracy to subvert and destroy Christianity. Kolbe's belief was not racial. It was, more than anything, fueled by that sense of Christianity besieged by the forces of the Enlightenment, that war-to-the-death between Godliness and godlessness, which underlay so much of pre-Vatican-II Catholicism and has reemerged in Protestant fundamentalism's battle with "secular humanism." (And for which some conservative Catholics, too, seem to have a nostalgic hankering.) Kolbe's negative references to Jews almost always came in tandem with — indeed seemed to be derived from — his warnings about Freemasonry. Because his anti-Semitism was not racial nor even primarily religious but based on a fantastic belief in a modern historical conspiracy, Kolbe distinguished between good and bad Jews, between religious ones and the irreligious enemies of Christianity. Even the latter, of course, he hoped to convert through prayer and example — but he also wanted to counteract what he imagined to be their mysterious, nefarious influence.

Now this was not the anti-Semitism of the Nazis, but it was anti-Semitism nonetheless. The ready belief in a fantastic conspiracy involving international Zionism was made possible by the Christian heritage of ignorance, superstition, and suspicion about Jews, the same images that occupied Father Kolbe's imagination also served the bloodthirsty doctrines of racial inferiority and extermination. And even if Hitler had never existed, Poland had its own problem with anti-Semitism. That story is far more complicated than most people realize. There were good reasons why Poland in the nineteenth century harbored a greater proportion (four-fifths) of the world's Jews than Israel does today, and why a great rabbi had written several hundred years before, "It is better to live on dry bread — but in peace — in Poland." Still, the renewed nationalism that gave birth to twentieth-century Poland was confronting the long-established prominence of Jews in the nation's commercial and professional life — and many, though by no means all, of Poland's leaders exploited the native reserves of anti-Semitism to exclude Jews from economic power. Although in an occasional and perhaps even "moderate" way, Father Kolbe appears to have agreed with this policy.

Does this give one license to say anything at all about Kolbe's attitude? To write, for example, as Christopher Hitchens did in the *Nation*, that Kolbe "argued that the Jews *had* to die," although there is not a shred of evidence in Kolbe's writings to suggest he held such a belief, let alone argued for it, and plenty of evidence that he abhorred it? Hitchens's defense is that any anti-Semitism whatsoever implies the Final Solution, and therefore restating Kolbe's views as Himmler's is only a matter of being "polemical." Actually Hitchens is a bright young English writer who suffers from George Bernard Shaw Disease — the conviction that no degree of unfairness can be a worse crime than being boring. Hitchens also believes that the American left would be invigorated if it were more anti-religious. In that respect, making Father Kolbe out to be a Nazi is just his idea of spirited conversation.

What does all this have to with sainthood, at least for those of us who, unlike Hitchens, don't consider the whole idea a piece of priestcraft left over from the Dark Ages? Saints, too, are sinners. Does not Father Kolbe's later service to Jews and his ultimate martyrdom at Auschwitz overshadow any earlier anti-Semitic statements?

Well, yes and no. The problem is that Father Kolbe has been proclaimed specifically a saint for our era, the era of the Holocaust. And anti-Semitism is specifically *the* sin of that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

era. What would be reassuring is some later indication in Kolbe's life that he at least *recognized* this sin, even in the attenuated but still dangerous form that he had himself exhibited. What is troubling is the absence of any such indication. And in the absence of any word from Kolbe, the church should have supplied that word itself, thoroughly airing and reflecting on this question in the course of Father Kolbe's canonization. Perhaps that is what the pope meant to do when he mnade his visit to Kolbe's Auschwitz cell the occasion for a denunciation of anti-Semitism. Unfortunately, there was no coming to terms, at that moment or at the moment of canonization, with Father Kolbe's own attitudes. There should have been. In the end, we are made free, not by exaggerations nor by excuses, but by the truth.

THE NEW CODE

Well, it's now official. You *can* be cremated, advise on the selection of your pastor or bishop, adjudicate marital cases, attend interminable committee meetings at all levels (except the pope's maybe), preach in church (but not the homily at Mass), administer all those coming priestless parishes, demand good sermons, decent music, and financial accountability of the clergy, join the Masons (just when there's little reason to want to), and if you happen to be a widowed deacon (no women need apply!), marry again. Sound like work? It will be. O my people, the church belongs to you -- its members, both glorious and flawed.

We have not seen the final text. But on balance, the new code of canon law seems a creditable piece of work. In almost every feature it underscores the subordinate role of law itself in sustaining the main point: the spirit of the Gospel. And happily the formulating commission abjured the ecumenically risky temptation to set down a "fundamental law" that would hold for the Uniate churches as well as the Roman rite.

As canonists, eager to place the new code in perspective, are the first to point out, we survived without a universal code for nineteen hundred years. An elderly priest reminded us the other day that, whatever the legalism of the post-Tridentine church may have been (our memory is short), it didn't come close to the toxic variety which rode in on the heels of the church's turn-of-century anti-modernism crisis and the promulgation of the 1917 code. The new code places that era behind us; supplants it with something much better.

Problematic details, in some cases more than irritating tics, remain. Though simplified procedures for marital annulments have been retained, it remains to be seen whether cancellation of the even more streamlined American norms was a wise move. Liturgical inculturation is ignored. And though the layperson's position in the church is greatly enhanced, many of the institutional bodies and procedures that would give muscle to lay participation are unmandated -- left at the bishop's discretion -- though "strongly urged." In general, the bishop's authority appears inadequately circumscribed -- and that doesn't need to mean hamstrung.

Finally, the new code suffers from what are not tics but the ticking of time bombs. Though much is improved in the new law to credit the active role of women in the church, they are still effectively excluded from any position of governance -- still a "they." And though the requirement that the local bishop license theologians (give a "canonical mandate") may trouble no one in Europe or the third world, in the U.S. it jeopardizes civil accreditation and public support of Catholic universities and colleges. It also raises serious questions regarding the independence of Catholic schools and their relationship to bishops, matters that will need immediate clarification. If a dispensing indult from this section of the code is not invoked, the recent joint study of the Canon Law Society of American and the Catholic Theological Society on cooperation between theologians and the bishops sets a precedent for resolving the issues here.

As for the continued exclusion of women, the work of the U.S. bishops to persuade Rome of the gravity of the issue has barely begun.

Washington report

CHANGING THE RULES

THE 98th GETS STARTED

THE MEDIA ATTENTION given to the opening of the 98th Congress was not nearly as evident during what may be viewed as the "actual" start of the new House of Representatives, that is, in December, when the Democratic Caucus met to organize for the 98th Congress. The decisions made by the Caucus at that time should be noted well since they will have an impact on the power of the Democratic leadership.

Since 1975, in the House, Members and Members-elect of both parties meet early in December to take the necessary steps to prepare for the new Congress including electing party leaders and approving committee assignments. As the majority party, the Democratic Caucus considered a number of amendments to the rules -- the way the House conducts its business -- and accepted ten changes. Committee assignments, one of the few effective tools of party discipline available to the leadership, were delayed for the major committees until the votes on the rules changes had occurred on opening day.

This delay on committee assignments generated speculation that the Democratic leadership wanted (or needed) the additional threat of withholding committee seats to ensure passage of several contested rule changes. However, when Majority Leader Jim Wright brought these hard-won rules to the floor, the most hotly contested change was omitted -- namely, the proposal to increase to two-thirds the number of signatures required on a petition to discharge a constitutional amendment

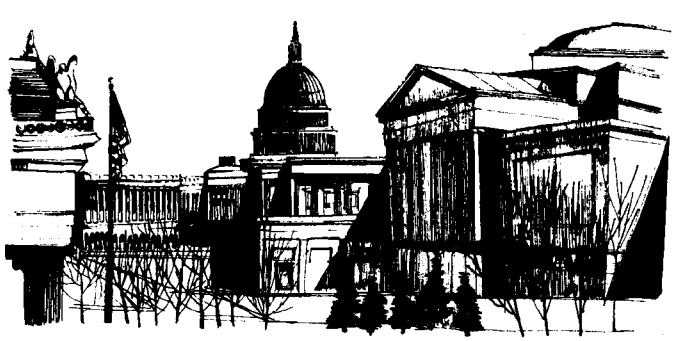
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from the Judiciary Committee. The Democratic leadership had been embarrassed, and Members distressed, by a pre-election vote on the balanced budget amendment. Moreover, there was many a nervous soul looking at the prospect in the upcoming Congress of constitutional amendment votes on school prayer, busing, and abortion brought to the floor by the use of a discharge petition signed by a majority of Members (although two-thirds are, of course, required for passage of a constitutional amendment). Given these circumstances, why wasn't the move made to increase the number of required signatures and thereby lessen the electoral anxieties of many Democrats?

Wright only allowed that the discharge rules change was dropped by the Caucus that morning, "due to the somewhat controversial nature of the proposed changes and the controversy that attended the proposal." It appears that the opposition was of such intensity, apparently fueled by pro-life concerns, to have generated (ironically) the extraordinary measure of a petition to the Speaker, signed by over fifty Members, requesting that this proposal not be submitted.

Given the contention surrounding several of the other rules changes, particularly a proposed restriction on legislative riders, there seems to have been a tactical retreat by the leadership. Yet the motivation remains obscure. Was there such concern over Democratic disgruntlement that it was felt the entire rules package would be threatened? It is more likely that the changes were simply becoming too costly in good will for the leadership for what they hoped to gain — after all, the discharge petition was the most opposed proposal in the Caucus. The withdrawal should give pause to those who have readily predicted the demise of social issues on the congressional agenda.

The Democratic leadership has nonetheless been able to maximize the results of the '82 election by extending the impact well beyond the additional twenty-six seats won. This has been achieved through the manipulation of the committee assignment process and the enactment of the Caucus-sanctioned rules package, despite Democratic disinclination and voluble Republican railing. The media has been preoccupied by the removal of Texas Democrat Phil Gramm from the Budget Committee. Yet of greater importance are both the difficulties encountered by many other "Boll Weevils" in the committee assignment process (including Louisiana Rep. John Breaux's losing bid for the Budget Committee) and the increased number of liberals assigned to the money committees.



Receiving most attention in the floor debate on the rules package was the change in the way in which riders — legislative language in the form of limitations — to appropriations bills may be offered on the floor. The new rules, in effect, allow the floor manager (usually the Appropriations Subcommittee Chair) to propose that debate be ended at any time after Appropriations Committee amendments have been considered. If a majority of the House supports the floor manager, debate is ended, and the House may vote for final approval. Hence a majority of Members will be able to avoid voting on such politically damaging floor amendments as limiting funds for abortion or busing — if they have not already been successfully added in Committee. By increasing its authority as a gatekeeper for legislative riders, the power of the Appropriations Committee is appreciably enhanced.

This further centralization of authority ought to be of benefit to party leadership, particularly considering the number of liberals added to the committee membership. Not only are the prospects diminished that conservative-initiated riders will be coming out of the committee, but it also is less likely that the leadership will be displeased with overall priorities in the appropriations bills finally reported to the full House.

Other rules changes assisting the leadership include the Speaker's discretionary authority to postpone a roll-call vote on approving the Journal — thereby circumventing nuisance quorum calls. The position of the Ways and Means Committee is also improved by a rule preventing any other committee from reporting any measure containing a tax or tariff matter. Since the rule would allow a point of order to be raised against such a provision, this amendment might be used by the leadership in preventing the Senate from adding tax or tariff amendments to unrelated measures — an additional defense tactic available to the House to protect its independent policy role.

Observers of Congress lament its porous and diffuse nature, decrying too many points of access and a dispersion of power. The recent actions of the Democratic leadership begin to address these criticisms. The rules changes will enable the House to reassert its role as the prominent chamber in fiscal matters. Moreover, the House will be able to construct policy alternatives with significantly less compromise of its more liberal perspective before facing the necessary concessions to the Senate and accommodation with the president.

But these concessions and accommodations will begin well before the chambers confront each other at the conference committee tables. They will be wrung out in the 98th Congress at every stage of the legislative process — budget, appropriations, and authorizations — and in every subcommittee, committee, and floor action. The evening news coverage of the new Congress treated us to a warmed-over portrait of Members and their families. Children were nestled and coddled, and good will oozed. Soon enough Members will look upon that opening day as one of the longer periods they spent with their children. They will see that the legislative timetable just keeps ticking away.

JEREMIAH BARUCH

(Jeremiah Baruch is the pseudonym of a Washington writer with a position in government.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anna Freud

HER FATHER'S DAUGHTER

THINKER & ACTIVIST OF THE FIRST RANK

THERE ARE the obvious things, those musings that form part of our shared stock of received epitaph and elegy and that bubble up spontaneously when a great man or woman whose life was our last link to another great one, or an era, or an event, dies. Anna was the last living child of Sigmund Freud, his youngest daughter and his intellectual heir. She served him well and faithfully but without slavishness and in full assurance of her own identity and powers. She protected his memory; honored his legacy; embodied and revised his theory and method; and created a great clinical institution, the Hampstead Child Therapy Clinic. She guided several generations of analysts, practitioners, doctors, scholars, lawyers, and students with the clarity of her intellect, the generosity of her impulses, the forcefulness of her personality, the strength of her character. Erik H. Erikson, Robert Coles, and many others cite her as their intellectual forebear and a source of their inspiration.

She founded, edited, and contributed actively — until very recent years — to the multi-volumed *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, the definitive reference for the psychoanalytic study and treatment of the child and the practice of childhood therapy. Her seminal work, *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense*, remains a classic in its field — indeed, it inaugurated that field. All this is true but strangely inadequate. Theorist, clinician, pioneer, teacher: these are the sure and certain markers of the public Anna Freud. But one senses that her deepest vocation, that task which gave her life its ultimate texture and form, was as the loyal daughter of a devoted father who was also a very great man.

The children of great men often turn out badly, sometimes very badly indeed. We can all name them. Even Joseph Stalin's daughter was no loyal chip off the Russian block. We understand why the legacy of the world historic figure to his less than world-historic offspring is so often sad, occasionally tragic. We say: how difficult to be always in the shadow of one's father. How impossible not to have one's own identity, to be viewed, even when one reaches adulthood, as "the son of so and so." Think how hard it must be to grow up in the limelight, to have the glare of publicity always upon oneself. So we "understand" even as we judge, or cluck in disapproval, or murmur satisfaction *sotto voce* that even the rich and famous have their trials and their glaring flaws.

None of this is apt when one turns to Freud's six children. They all turned out well, and one of them, Anna, was remarkable. Her gifts of intellect were recognized early and encouraged. Her father sought his daughter's independence; indeed, he celebrated it. In a letter to Lou Andreas-Salome, June 1, 1935, Freud wrote: "My one source of satisfaction is Anna. It is remarkable how much influence and authority she has gained among the general run of analysts — many of whom, alas, have derived little from analysis as far as their personal character is concerned. It is surprising, too, how sharp, clear, and unflinching she is in her mastery of the subject. Moreover, she is truly independent of me; at the most I serve as a catalyst." Perhaps this serves as a clue to that Anna Freud whose image seems to me most luminous, whose central trait is not her intellect but her capacity for a loyalty that was never obsequious, that was, instead, the chosen vocation of a remarkable woman for a father who, for sixteen years, fought a heroic, losing fight against the ravages of a painful cancer and, as he grew weaker, and withdrawn from public view, turned to his daughter as his public "voice" and his private succor.

The relationship between Anna Freud and her father is lovingly detailed in Max Schur, *Freud: Living and Dying*. What I wish to convey is the *texture* of that relationship, one that might easily have grown willfully demanding, on the one side, resentfully compliant, on the other. But there appears to have been none of this, none of that smoldering bitterness that corrodes human empathy when a younger, healthy person is poignantly needed by an older, ill one. Perhaps Anna Freud's

How to fix the economy without really trying

EUGENE SCHLOSSBERGER

SUPPLY-SIDE and demand-side economics have proven powerless to cure our economic ills. The time has come for a new approach to economic analysis, an approach based on incontrovertible verities. Such an approach is provided by lateral-side economics.

Lateral-side analysts begin with the supposition that the price of an object is very closely correlated with how much it costs. This is called the "price/cost" thesis, and it enables one to predict inflation rates, given Friedbraith's theorem that inflation rates rise as prices increase. Although Friedbraith's theorem has not been formally proven, preliminary statistical studies indicate that downturn cost curves correlate closely with deflationary periods in South Succotash and other Corn and Bean Belt cities. Thus prices are the key to lateral-side economics; if lateral-side economists are right, monetarism and fiscalism will yield to price-ism. Since the factors which influence prices are taxes, profits, and perversity, we will examine each parameter in turn.

Tax rates, in lateral-side economics, are measured in terms of money due the government, or MDG. For as MDG rises, so do government revenues. In turn, government revenues, when expressed as a percentage of the tax

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

intellectual independence from her father, her stature as a public persona in her own right, helps to account for the mutual respect, the reciprocity of tenderness, the humor and concern that by every account marked their relationship. But I think there is more: Anna Freud's rare capacity to identify with the suffering of another without "losing" her self, an ability, with her father, to think rationally even as one cared deeply, to act, therefore, from the gift of devotion rather than out of brittle, forced filiopiety.

After her father's death, Anna Freud, as the keeper of the flame, was firm, determined to honor her father's memory, to protect him from the salacious and the cheap, to share him with the sagacious and respectful, There was, of course, much controversy about whether her hand had grasped the reins too tightly. Beyond dispute is her vocation as a daughter loyal and true, and her accomplishments as a thinker and activist of the first rank.

Two images of Anna Freud capture her for me. The first is a photograph taken when she was forty-two. The photographer, Edmund Engelman, posed Anna Freud on March 22, 1938, shortly after the SS had invaded Bergasse 19 for a second time. Anna Freud had been arrested and taken to Gestapo headquarters. Engelman writes that it "was only by the use of her wits and great personal courage that she succeeded in being released." What the photograph shows is a woman of striking visage: strong face, broad features framed by deeply set, wide, dark eyes, a rather large mouth, the dark hair pulled back into (one presumes) a bun. But there is more: resolution, fear, concern, relief, eyes that speak of her recent interrogation, a mouth that, determinedly set as it is, nevertheless turns up at the corners as if to break at any moment into a tentative smile, then a hearty laugh.

The second image is a personal one. I met Anna Freud, fleetingly, in 1977. She was then eighty-one years old, matriarch of Hampstead. I had journeyed to Hampstead for one of their Wednesday afternoon open seminars, bearing a letter of introduction from a Boston psychoanalyst with whom I was then studying psychoanalytic theory. There wasn't very much to the letter — just two sentences about who I was and that my long-range aim in life, or one of them, was to use psychoanalytic concepts in the study of social life and thought. As several spritely, gray-haired women entered the room my expectations rose — was that she? No, perhaps that was she? There was no mistaking the real Anna Freud when she entered. Slightly

base, determine tax rates, which in turn affect the amount of money due the government. This is known as the tax/revenue spiral, and is thought to be the primary cause of CPA's. It has been suggested that since taxes and death are the two inevitable factors, lowering of tax rates would result in lower mortality rates. Pessimists, however, theorize that the inevitability quotient is a constant, and so any decrease in taxes must be offset by more deaths. Lateral-side economics, however, holds that the death rate is always 100 percent eventually.

Profit figures, in lateral-side economics, are a product of accounting procedures. It is thus crucial for individuals to determine how much money they have. There are two methods of so doing. One can simply count up one's money; this is called the direct tally method. Alternatively, one may calculate how much money there is, how much money one doesn't have, and subtract the latter from the former. This is called the trickle-down method. Which method one uses is a matter of taste, although there is no accounting for taste.

Perversity is perhaps the most important aspect of lateral-side economics, since the economy's behavior is in large part governed by the principle of perversity (PP): *every economic policy brings about the opposite of its intended effect*. For example, as the first year of Reaganomics amply illustrates, a policy designed to increase money supply and balance the budget invariably creates budget deficits which shrink the available supply of money. Conversely, a full-employment program will put firms out of business and thus result in widespread unemployment *(vide* the "Second Depression" of the late thirties).

Lateral-side economics bases its prescription on the PP; we should pursue an economic program which we would like to fail. Hence lateral-side economists propose a policy based on the following goal: total bankruptcy. The executives of Chrysler and Lockheed have done very well by following this policy. It is time for the United States government to follow their example.

Skeptics might conclude that such a policy would be disastrous. A few moments of calm consideration, however, shows otherwise. For either a) we will succeed in going bankrupt, or b) PP will ensure that the economy is healthy, sound, and solvent. Since b) is hardly undesirable, we need only consider outcome a). Suppose that, *contra* PP, America nears bankruptcy. The world economy could not sustain such a severe blow. Saudi Arabia, for example, would not permit it; the Saudis would immediately guarantee our loans and assume our deficit. Moreover, third world countries, instead of reviling us and clamoring for our help, would welcome us as a sister insolvent. Thus we would solve both our economic and political difficulties, killing, as it were, two turkeys with one stone.

The true beauty of lateral-side economics, however, is that its triumph is inevitable; given the power of special interest groups, bankruptcy cannot be put off indefinitely. Thus lateral-side economics is well named; all we need to do is LIE DOWN AND WAIT. The future belongs to us.

EUGENE SCHLOSSBERGER

(Eugene Schlossberger is an Assistant Professor at The Pennsylvania State University. He is not now and has never been a Professor of Economics.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bowed, determined in her bearing, her face remarkable. She had grown to look like the pictures of her father in his old age — the same blend of sternness and humor, of strength and deep compassion that had not come "naturally" but was, instead, a hard-won achievement.

Anna Freud conducted the seminar with aplomb. She told a wry story about one of her cases, an analysis of an eleven-year-old girl, which she thought had failed only to learn years later all was well. I've forgotten the details but I'll never forget the moment when Anna Freud uttered, "Und now she is a happy woman, with a career and family und before she was just a case of (theatrical pause) penis envy." Because she grinned, the audience did also. It was a masterful performance — an instance of Freudian wit that tweaked yet honored her father.

The seminar over, Anna Freud headed for the door. I walked up, approached her tentatively, finally handed her the letter. She glanced at me, opened it, read it quickly, then said, "I'm always happy to meet someone who wants to do good with my father's work." She smiled but her eyes told me more: the parting look she gave me conveyed encouragement and simultaneously issued a warning. Anna Freud's eyes said: "Someone who *wants* to do good with my father's work had better mean it, had better be cut out for the task. For there is no more important work to be done." She walked away, surrounded by friends and colleagues, a slight figure moving somewhat haltingly down the hallway.

Anna Freud, rest in peace. JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN

(Jean Bethke Elshtain, is an associate professor of political science at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.)

Of several minds: *Thomas Powers*

WHAT DO THEY WANT?

WHY GREAT POWERS DO WHAT THEY DO

A FEW YEARS AGO I asked a student of political and military affairs what was the source of Russian interest in Angola. It seemed such a remote, useless, God-forsaken spot. It was a ridiculous distance from the Soviet Union, it had no natural wealth to recommend it, the climate was unappealing, South Africa was large, close and hostile. Why would the Russians risk something which mattered — détente with the United States — for an expensive adventure bound to make enemies and strain their relations with friends? (For that matter, I had always found it hard to comprehend Portugal's willingness to beggar itself for nothing more than the illusion of empire.) My friend was a bit puzzled himself. The best answer he could find was arcane in the extreme; the development of over-the-horizon radar, he said, would allow Soviet clients to keep track of shipping traffic around the Cape of Good Hope.

But there was no puzzlement in Washington. A base in Angola would threaten Namibia (one of the world's leading diamond producers) and the Congo (an important source of uranium and other minerals). It would provide a sanctuary for black rebels fighting the white regime of South Africa, thus giving Moscow a voice in the fate of an important part of the globe. It offered further proof of the utility of Cuban proxies. And so on and so forth. These explanations all made sense of a geo-political sort — they are the common stuff of debate in world capitals — but still left the central mystery intact. Why should the Soviet Union care about events so far away, promising benefits so marginal, involving peoples whose vernacular tongues are unknown to all but a handful of Russians. There is something nutty in ambition of this kind. Foreign offices think it quite a matter of course but people of the nations they represent — Russia in this instance, the United States in others — simply don't care. Can it really be that the lives of ordinary people are not just affected but actually determined by *everything* that happens *anywhere*?

If the death of détente can be blamed on something anyone *did*, then it was probably the fault of Russian adventures in Ethiopia, Yemen, and Angola. The "strategic" location of Ethiopia and Yemen, close to the Persian Gulf, naturally concerned policy-makers in Washington, since Europe and Japan are both heavily dependent on Arab oil. But the genuine alarm of American officials was probably the result of Russian success as much as anything else. Sending Cuban troops was a bold act. In the wake of Vietnam the United States was unable to respond in kind. This made officials feel helpless and impotent. Doubtless their "success" made Russian officials feel good — strong, daring, and effective. But it's hard to see that these endeavors made sense, even from Moscow's point of view, in the long run. They finished off the spirit of détente, which doomed SALT, which prompted a vast American military buildup, which meant the Soviet Union would have to respond in kind. The cost to Russia of this melancholy chain of events is bound to be billions of dollars, hardship at home, a renewed fear of war. And for what?

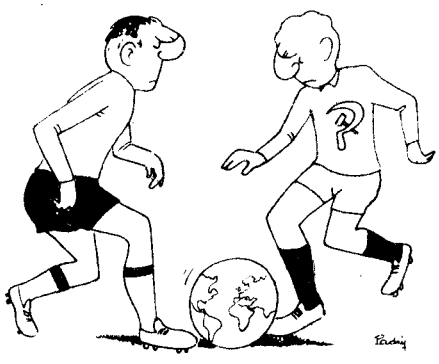
My point here is not to blame the world's current state of tension on the Russians — in the past we have done similar things which scared them — but to ask why great powers pursue their "interests" on such a vast scale. This is what seems to trouble and mystify ordinary citizens. Hatred is easy to understand as a cause of tension and war, and it is easy to understand how injury can lead to hatred. There is nothing mystifying about the Arab-Israeli wars. Over the last hundred years a million European Jews have migrated to Palestine and now live where Arabs used to live. It comes as no surprise that the Arabs feel a sense of injury. But the Jews came in flight, seeking a refuge. The millions who failed to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

escape were mostly murdered. The Russians can make no similar claim of the right of self-defense to explain their probings in Africa, Afghanistan, the Caribbean, Vietnam, and Cambodia, not to mention Eastern Europe. Russia has territory, people and resources in plenty. If it's power that Moscow is after, there is vast untapped potential for power at home. If the Russians could get as much out of the working day as the Dutch or the Japanese, who could stand against them? Indeed, the Russian economy is starved for the very funds and attention squandered on foreign adventures. In addition, the staggering cost of defense is importantly — perhaps even largely — the result of the fears which these adventures arouse abroad. It has been this way for two hundred years. The Russia inherited by the Bolsheviks was the result of long imperial expansion east towards China, south towards India, west and southwest into the Baltic and the Balkans. We can explain each acquisition till the cows come home; it is the whole which is troubling. What do the Russians want?

Doubtless the Russians could ask the same of us. When Russia was only landlocked misery surrounding the wooden cathedrals of Moscow, America was a couple of million people east of the Allegheny mountains. We got our size the same way the Russians got theirs — by taking it from weaker neighbors. But this only begs the question. What the Russians want — and what we want — is ultimately the source of the trouble between us, the thing which goes deeper than policy or even history and pushes us toward war. What they want and what we want undoes the initiatives of diplomats, it overrides the caution of allies, it poisons understanding, mocks the sentiments of peacemakers, arouses suspicion. It is what goes wrong when things go wrong. It is the elemental part of what makes us adversaries, the thing which makes us wake up at night, and keeps us busy at the frontiers.

The closest parallel to this elemental wanting I can think of — so close it may spring from the same source — is the appetite characteristic of business titans. Many examples can be found in Matthew Josephson's book, *The Robber Barons*, but none reveals the pattern more clearly than the recent attempt of the oil millionaire Nelson Bunker Hunt to manipulate the silver market. Hunt was never formally charged with trying to corner the market in silver futures, which is a crime, but most observers think that is, in effect, what he was up to. By steady purchases of bullion and futures Hunt and his partners drove the price of silver up from around $12 an ounce to $50, at which point the price collapsed. The puzzling thing about this episode is why Hunt did it. If things had worked out differently he might have made a billion dollars, but what can a billion dollars buy which scores of millions cannot? A man can only eat and drink so much. A house can only be so big before you get lost in it. When yachts grow beyond a certain



size you might as well book passage on a ship. By all accounts Hunt had money enough, long before the silver adventure, to do anything a man might want to do, or acquire anything a man might want to acquire. A billion dollars is a nutty sort of goal, a source of trouble rather than gratification. And yet there are many men who would like a billion dollars, many who have ruined themselves in the attempt to get it, even a few who have succeeded. Ordinary people can hardly conceive of desire on such a scale.

It would be easier to understand if the men who struggle for such sums had in the back of their minds something they wanted to *do* with it. Most seem to have no such plan. Howard Hughes, towards the end of his life, bought a large chunk of Las Vegas. This is a truly unfathomable endeavor. What did he plan to *do* with Las Vegas? Apparently nothing. It was enough simply to own it. There is no evidence he even liked gambling. He seems to have had no interest in show girls. He was indifferent to stand-up comics and Frank Sinatra. Not even the climate, which is spectacular, seems to have attracted him. He secluded himself at the top of one of his hotels, sealed all the windows, worried excessively about germs, and drove the local citizens half crazy with trying to figure out what he was up to. So far as I know Hughes built nothing in Las Vegas. He merely owned it for awhile. Then he grew weary of the venture and departed. Doubtless he sold out at a profit. So what? He had long passed the point where more money could have any practical material effect on his life.

This elemental wanting is characteristic of big corporations as well. A few years ago fierce bidding wars for oil companies dominated the financial news. I remember reading that one of the contestants for the Marathon Oil Company — I think it was Mobil — had put together a line of credit of *seven billion dollars* for the deal. But U.S. Steel got Marathon instead. What did the loser do with the $7 billion? Nothing. That was money enough for a great venture. It could have bought the whole of the South Bronx. But the line of credit simply expired, unused. The lack of imagination inherent in such bidding wars is breathtaking. What difference does it make who owns Marathon? *Somebody* has to own it. The real challenge would be to create something new, but a kind of Gresham's Law seems to be at work here. The acquisitive spirits tend to overwhelm the creative spirits. They don't want to acquire great business empires *for* anything; they just want them.

Nations seem to be much the same. They don't want influence, territory, and power *for* anything. Simply having them is enough. The appetite which made a nation get big pushes it on to get bigger still. It is a blind, instinctive thing, overriding doubts and caution. The rulers of empires can't seem to help themselves. They didn't rise to power by minding the store. When they meet an obstacle the pressure builds until something gives. Then ordinary citizens pay the bill.

THOMAS POWERS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MAINTAINING CATHOLIC CULTURE IS NO LONGER PRIMARY

Revolution & alienation in the American church

DAVID K. O'ROURKE

THERE IS a revolution going on in the American Catholic church that will make ". . . the abortion issue, the school-aid controversy, and the tax-exempt status of churches look like a child's sparkler on the Fourth of July." So wrote Msgr. Vincent Yzermans on the Op-Ed page of the *New York Times* for Nov. 14, 1981. According to Msgr. Yzermans, former information director for the American bishops and a long-time reporter on the American church, this revolution is the most significant event in the American Catholic church ". . . since Lord Baltimore's contingent of Catholics disembarked on Maryland's shores in 1634." The church is leaving the ranks of mainline Protestants and Evangelicals to become, like the Quakers, a peace church.

Writing in the Dec. 4, 1981 issue of *Commonweal,* John Garvey cited the trend ". . . towards a stricter administration of the sacraments of baptism and matrimony" and his concern that this new policy is going to be turning people away.

I believe that each of these writers is correct. I recently moved from a term as pastor of a parish involved in the changes Msgr. Yzermans describes to a sabbatical year I spent studying the new, stricter sacramental programs Mr. Garvey writes about. There is no doubt in my mind that they are part and parcel of the same change in the life, leadership, and priorities of the American church. I want to discuss this change, especially as it affects the priorities and leadership in the church in the United States. There really are significant changes in the leadership and priorities in the church, but they are taking place so fast that they are passing by almost unnoticed. And in the passing a significant number of Catholics are being left not only behind but outside the church. This is because the new leadership is re-defining not only its own role as leaders but the meaning of belonging to the church for the average person. And a lot of people who think of themselves as Catholic do not fit the definition.

What are the new priorities? Put simply, the welfare of the poor and the matter of armaments. The lot of the poor who have moved into our American cities, and the welfare of third world people, both in the third world and in the United States as immigrants or illegal aliens are, by conscious choice, becoming very important to the leadership of the American church. The maintenance of Catholic culture among traditionally identified American Catholics, while still important and even the chief function of many a parish, is no longer the prime issue it once was. The fostering of peace, international order, and nuclear disarmament are becoming more important to the American bishops and the other leaders in the American church than the maintenance of a strongly unified and institutionally solid community, concerned primarily about self-preservation and growth.

A dozen years ago the Catholic bishops devoted a significant part of their annual meeting to the question of federal funds for Catholic schools. Today the schools are almost a minor issue. The focus is on armaments and social order. As Archbishop Roach said at the November, 1981 meeting of the bishops, "The proposed expenditure of 1.5 trillion dollars for defense over the next five years stands in stark contrast to budget cuts which threaten the food, the health care, and the education of the poor." The basic morality of war stands out as the prime issue. "On a global scale, the most dangerous moral issue in the public order is the nuclear arms race. The church in the United States has a special responsibility to address this question . . . The church needs to say 'no' clearly and decisively to the use of nuclear arms."

What is almost as remarkable as the change in priorities itself is the fact that most Catholics do not know it is taking place. The revolution that Msgr. Yzermans says is the most significant event in the life of the American Catholic church is passing American Catholics by unnoticed. Why is this?

Father Andrew Greeley has said again and again that no one pays attention any more to anything the bishops say because of the *Humanae Vitae* crisis. This is possible. But there is, I

FATHER DAVID K. O'ROURKE, O.P., *is associate director of the Family Life Ministry of the Diocese of Oakland and adjunct professor of pastoral theology at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

believe, another reason, one also documented by Father Greeley although not enlarged upon by him, which allows for an explanation more in accord with the dimensions of the situation. It also allows for the fact that the leadership in the American church now goes beyond the bishops.

What is happening is that the leaders in the American church are changing the church's priorities, and changing them rapidly, from self-interest to social interest. To describe this self-interest I want to look backwards a few years.

Most of us who come from Catholic families whose religious life was marked by a healthy dose of anti-clericalism can recall the family's favorite clerical horror stories, usually tales from the past of high-handedness and autocracy. Today they are hard to believe, and we wonder why our elders put up with such things. Why did able, aggressive, intelligent Catholic lay people put up with such nonsense? That, I believe, is the wrong question. It gives far too little credit to the older generations. The real question, and one which makes much better sense, is to ask what they got out of it. In addition to spiritual ministry and the administration of the sacraments what did they get in return for tolerating such an autocratic church?

Father Greeley gives us the answers. Success, power, prosperity. In a few generations American Catholics have gone from immigrant status to security, and have done so aided by church institutions. Even if we challenge Father Greeley's conclusions that American Catholics have made it to the top, and I am aware that his conclusions have been challenged, I think we can say that at least we have done well.

Except for our missionary efforts the focus of the American church has been the American church. It was a focus backed with commitment, personnel, hard work, and money. This focus is changing and the priorities of the American church with it.

The change in priorities is not just talk, it is being institutionalized. Some dioceses are changing not only their understanding of what they ought to be doing, but their actual work as well. There are dioceses that operate and subsidize schools in urban centers for the children of the urban poor. Significantly, many of the families, often single-parent families, who send their children to these schools are not Catholic. Religion is not the requirement it was for entrance. The requirement is need.

Diocesan social services are providing resources to ease the lost of the socially marginal. The elderly poor and ill-housed in residential hotels, the shopping bag ladies, the mentally ill turned loose in the cities and, generally, those who cannot cope with urban life but find themselves in it are the beneficiaries of the efforts of the social services regardless of their religion.

Because of decreasing memberships congregations of sisters are establishing priorities among the schools they staff, deciding which ones they will continue to staff and which they will let go. Maintaining a presence in the inner city gets a high priority because of what is called its witness value, and despite financial problems and the fact that the percentage of Catholics is lower than in other schools.

THESE CHANGES in focus and priority are not fortuitous and are not idiosyncratic. They have come as a result of considerable thought on both the diocesan and national levels. What is perhaps most significant is that they have come out of a definition of church and a theory of ministry that are different from the ones used in the American church until recently.

The extent of the difference in priority and in decision-making process was brought home to me when I was in the process of cleaning out my files at the end of my term of office as pastor. The communications from the bishop's office from the late '60s and early '70s were directives, they were from the bishop himself, for the most part, and they dealt with the parish school, the repair and maintenance of buildings, and some implementation of the liturgical changes decreed by Vatican II. The communications for the last few years are from the senate of priests as well as the bishop, they report salary, health, and retirement decisions arrived at between the diocese and the superiors of sisters' congregations, the policies on marriage and baptism being debated in the senate, and the social justice priorities of the diocese.

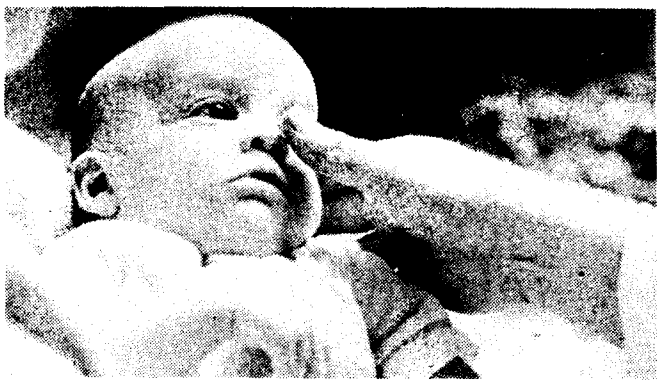
Equally significant is the fact that these changes are being brought about by a new kind of leader in the American church. Leadership is passing into the hands of the "converted." I use this word because it seems to be the common mark among those now providing leadership. The leadership, itself, is coming from a broader base. There is the national bishops' conference as in the past, but there are also the senates of priests in the several dioceses, the leadership organizations of women religious, and the conferences of major superiors of men religious. And within these groups are individuals, men and women, who have assumed a directive role in them and in the church.

It is common to say that the source of the new priorities in the church is Vatican II. Vatican II has provided the theological rationale and authority for these changes, but it has not provided the impetus to change. This has come out of the lives of the leaders. As I said, they are the converted. They have experienced a conversion which has strengthened their sense of membership in the church. That new sense of membership is written in terms of personal commitment.

Personal commitment is a clear sounding phrase whose meaning becomes less clear as the need to define just what the commitment is to becomes more concrete. This difficulty in definition is no small matter. It is, I believe, the key to understanding what is going on in the church today, both the revolution and the alienation. What is required of Catholics today for consideration as real Catholics is personal commitment. Its source is clearer than its purpose. It is from an experience of the church in one of its social or religious renewal programs.

Many leaders in the church today, and often the vocal and effective members in the groups that are changing the American church's priorities, are men and women who have been active in the civil rights movement, the anti-Vietnam war movement, the current move to resolve the conflict in Central America, the pro-life movement, and in specifically religious

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



movements like the cursillo movement, the marriage encounter, and the charismatic renewal. Involvement in these movements has brought about the individual's conversion and the sense of personal commitment.

TO GRASP the significance of this involvement we have to recognize that it has provided many a priest, bishop, sister, and brother with their answers to very real and very personal questions about their lives and their vocations. What it means to be a priest, or a religious, or even a Christian and Catholic are questions that will come up forcefully in times of turmoil like our own.

Interestingly these movements cannot be classed together under some political banner. What they have in common is not ideological, it is experiential, an experience of conversion and commitment. Their adherents have resolved personal questions, sometimes personal crises, through taking part in these movements, a participation that is personally involving and vocationally clarifying. This is what I mean by conversion and the individual as converted. A mobilizing clarity of purpose has come into their lives.

It is often the products of these movements who are the vocal and effective leaders of the priests' senates, the bishops' meetings, and the conferences of superiors for men and women religious. And it is these same vocal and effective leaders who are becoming the leaders in the American church. They are spearheading the move to involve the church in discussions of armaments, nuclear disarmament, and in third world issues. And they are bringing about the changes in diocesan policies on the sacraments. The address of Archbishop Roach at the meeting of the American bishops is noteworthy not only because of what it says but because it reflects a point of view that is common in the leadership groups in the American church.

Sadly, it is this renewal that is at the root of the alienation of people from the church. The alienation does not come from disagreements on moral or political issues between the leaders and people of the church. It is due more to a gulf between them. The experience of conversion and commitment that is common on the leadership level of the church is simply not part of the experience of many Catholic people. After having seen the church changed under their feet without ever having been asked about it, they now see it walking away from them, leaving them behind.

This alienation is made concrete at times of baptism and marriage. The marginally Catholic couple who come to have their baby baptized and have no good reason for it other than thinking that they should will be effectively put off. The same is true for marriage. There is a reluctance to marry people who are not personally committed to living their faith. One young man I know went to his parish to arrange for a marriage and was asked whether he truly wanted to be committed to the Lord. "Father," he said, "I don't want to get religion, I just want to get married." He ended up on my doorstep not as much angry or hurt at the reaction that that statement provoked as bewildered by it.

Across the board in the American church the cost of membership is being raised. It is being raised by the very same people who are leading the church in the directions mentioned by Msgr. Yzermans, and it is being done for the very same reasons. It is part of the revolution he described.

The purpose of the policies on marriage and baptism is not punitive, it is not just a tightening-up, and it goes far beyond concern for divorce statistics or Catholic family life. It is a question of definition, a clarification of what it means to be a Catholic. The operational definition now involves conversion of some kind and personal commitment. Without this commitment not only is the authenticity of the Catholic's faith open to question, but he or she does not have the experiential means needed to understand what is going on in the church.

I do not disagree with the change in the church's priorities. During my years in the priesthood I have worked to see them established. I do not find the establishment of policies for baptism and marriage to be inappropriate. People should understand the meaning of the motions they are going through. But I find the alienation from the church of our religiously wandering or uninvolved Catholics to be a tragedy.

GOOD LEADERSHIP requires that the leader not get too many steps ahead of the people he or she is leading. In the move to a peace church the leaders in the American church are miles ahead. There is at least as great a need to explain this revolution to the American Catholics as there is a need to impress its merit on the government.

In their recent statements the American bishops have renounced the language of political coercion in favor of well-reasoned arguments. As Archbishop Roach told the bishops, ". . . religious organizations should be subjected to the same standards of rational, rigorous presentation of their views as any other participants in the public debate." This is the language of moral leadership, and moral leadership is very much needed. It is especially needed on the parish level, where the relationship to the church or alienation from it most often takes place.

Mr. Garvey writes that the new policies on marriage and baptism represent a trend to "a stricter administration of the sacraments." That is not the language of moral persuasion, that is the language of law. Mr. Garvey uses it because, regardless of what might be intended on the decision-making level about renewing the sacramental life of the church, it is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

perceived too often as another decision handed down without discussion.

Ironically it is often the clergy who are most involved in the new directions in church leadership who are most insistent on the new policies for baptism and marriage. Let me give an example, that might explain why this is so. Two years ago, while still a pastor, I spent the better part of a day at a meeting of the county board of supervisors lobbying against a reduction in the mental health budget. I left the meeting early in order to keep two appointments, one with a couple planning marriage, the other with a couple who wanted their three children baptized. The mother of the children admitted, "I haven't been in a while," but said that when she did go she felt so much better, "the candles, the Latin, the ceremony, it does something." I explained. "No Latin! Not at all?" she said. And then a bit more timorously, "What about candles?"

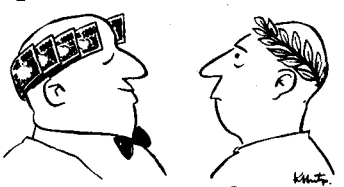
The couple considering marriage had been sharing the same bed for several years and were now, very tentatively, trying to decide whether or not they could share some of the more important things, like money, in their essentially separate lives. They were successfully self-centered, wealthy professional people from Catholic families. Well dressed, well educated, well heeled birds of prey. The very consideration of a commitment that might involve a joint bank account caused great anxiety.

It would have been easy to dismiss each of these couples on the pretext that what they were looking for was something other than baptism or matrimony as we are coming to define them. It was, I admit, especially tempting considering the meeting I left in order to meet with them. And yet, like the poor people who would have been turned loose on the city's streets to cope alone, each of these couples was in a spiritual desert looking for something better and dependent on others in order to get it. In their wandering and in their need they are not that different from the generations of people who have been the church in the past, and whose sometimes thread-thin hanging-on accounts for our own presence in the church. The two couples came that afternoon hoping for understanding, knowing they fell short of the ideal, and fearing rejection.

We simply cannot turn people like this away. It would be very arbitrary and cruel. But we are in danger of doing just that. There have been gaps between the leaders and the people of the church before. This one is more serious because it is being institutionalized on the level of the sacraments which, heretofore, have been one moment at least in which divided peoples have come together.

Human compassion requires that we not allow this alienation to come about. Pastoral care requires that we tolerate the gulf between Christian ideal and human achievement, the same way our failings are tolerated. And the very existence of a new generation of Catholics requires that this alienation not come about. The two sacraments designed for the regeneration of the church cannot be used for its limitation. The move to a church of peace requires the support of our Catholic people, not isolation from them. To move away from them at this time would be an action as mad as the proliferation of nuclear arms.

QUESTIONS NOVAK & BENNE POSE TO THE RELIGIOUS LEFT



Does capitalism equal pluralism equal democracy?

PETER STEINFELS

"MANY THOUGHTFUL PERSONS have observed that the United States has evolved a wholly new form of capitalism, variously called democratic capitalism, mass capitalism, or . . . people's capitalism . . . We have a unique experience that we ourselves need to understand and to communicate. . . . But somehow we have not been able to do it well—to describe this new people's capitalism, and all that it means to the spiritual and cultural life of the people, as well as to their material well-being."

This is not Michael Novak in 1982, but Ralph Cordiner, Chairman of General Electric, in 1956—opening the first of the McKinsey lectures given annually at Columbia University's Graduate School of Business. Cordiner was simply enunciating what, in various guises and with some variations, was the common creed of that time. American capitalism was different. It could not be taxed with the sins of the past. Thanks to a dynamic balance struck between various forces—business, government, and labor, in the usual formulation—American capitalism achieved both justice and abundance, and thereby eliminated the danger of deep social division. Upon this new capitalism rested the hope of democracy, if only the world would recognize its true nature and benefits, especially that portion of the world susceptible to the false promises of Marxism and Communism.

The idea of democratic capitalism is not new. It is one of the charms of Michael Novak in *The Spirit of Democratic*

PETER STEINFELS *is executive editor of* Commonweal. *His* The Neoconservatives: The Men Who Are Changing America's Politics *is available in Touchstone paperback (Simon and Schuster).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Capitalism (Simon and Schuster, $17.50, 434 pp.) that, having spent so much of the fifties in the seminary, he is determined to reinvent that decade. It is less charming that he should inflict his rediscovery on us with such a vengeance. The fifties apologists for "democratic capitalism" were likely to see it as an expression of "American exceptionalism." It was a recent achievement attributable, perhaps, to this land's special material advantages or uniquely democratic ethos, and only lately exported to Europe and the other continents by American arms and aid. Novak, however, projects democratic capitalism back two centuries and over two continents, and he gives capitalism rather than democracy the causative edge. In this regard as in many others, Robert Benne, in *The Ethic of Democratic Capitalism* (Fortress, 1981, $10.95, 286 pp.), is more modest. Eschewing larger historical or social schemes, he sticks with the American present and merely argues that its current combination of capitalism and democracy is "morally defensible."

Novak's project is grander. "For two centuries," he writes, "democratic capitalism has been more a matter of practice than of theory"; and he now offers, at last, to "grasp the ideals latent in its practice." A worthwhile undertaking, perhaps, but *not* what Novak has done: In a previous article I have already suggested how thoroughly he has explored those "two centuries . . . of practice" (*Commonweal*, January 14, 1983). Nevertheless, setting aside the question of historical pedigree, what are the "ideals" that he deduces from this cloudily imagined past?

Democratic capitalism, he tells us, is characterized by "three dynamic and converging systems functioning as one: a democratic policy, an economy based on markets and incentives, and a moral-cultural system which is pluralistic and, in the largest sense, liberal." Each one of these systems must be "structurally separated" from the others. Each has its own institutions and its own ethos. Each sphere creates tensions with the others—and offers support. Each develops virtues that the others need or lack. Where all past "traditional" societies and all alternative "socialist" ones are said to be "unitary," democratic capitalism alone promises a pluralism of three systems that are at once balancing and buttressing, sustaining and self-correcting.

NOW THIS IS an attractive scheme, no matter how questionable Novak's claim that it represents the latent ideals of two centuries of democratic capitalism. Novak is a partisan of pluralism, and even his most critical readers ought to agree with him (and with Benne) that a healthy, humane society should have multiple, competing centers of institutional power and of intellectual and moral energy. But does contemporary capitalism in fact insure that such is the case? Among the most abiding sources of discontent with capitalism is the belief that over time it destroys rather than creates genuine pluralism. Benne acknowledges this criticism and addresses it directly, although I believe incompletely, in a chapter entitled "Is There Such a Thing as Democratic Capitalism?" Novak, on the other hand, repeatedly suggests that opposition to capitalism is based on an explicit or surreptitious commitment to a "unitary order." Where Benne tries to marshal empirical evidence to show that capitalism is not antagonistic to pluralism, Novak simply elaborates as a "latent ideal" his scheme of "three dynamic and converging systems."

Does this scheme really reply to the major questions about capitalism, pluralism, and democracy? I believe it does not, and would point out the following difficulties.

● Novak offers no criteria except his own subjective judgment for concluding that these three "systems" are in fact sustaining and self-correcting rather than colluding and suborning, or fatally antagonistic and corroding. Novak allows that the "dynamic balance" between systems can be destroyed; indeed, like Ronald Reagan and businessmen generally, he insists that government, allied with anti-capitalist moral-cultural forces, has gone too far in limiting the proper independence of the economic sphere. But as Joseph L. Walsh perceptively noted in a 1979 *Commonweal* article, "At the very least Novak ought . . . to articulate the basis on which he judges 'too far' or 'not enough.' "

A decade ago, for example, in *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics*, Novak wrote: "The radical problem of American democracy is economic. We have succeeded, by and large, in separating church and state. We have not succeeded in separating church and economy, or state and economy. The same is true for those organs of the imagination which have replaced the churches in their impact on the human spirit—the media . . . and the schools. Economic power rules." As usual, we must ask who is closer to the truth, Novak I or Novak II? In part, deciding is a matter of reading the trends, but it is also a question of what end-state in society one considers "balance." This side of the extreme cases of theocracy or totalitarianism, Novak's scheme offers no guidelines.

It is interesting to note the sea-change that Novak has wrought on the source of this tripartite framework of economy, polity, and culture, namely Daniel Bell's analysis in *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. Bell offered a theory of "three realms" as a *descriptive* framework for analyzing not capitalism but contemporary *society* (and perhaps other societies as well); and his analysis emphasized not the harmonious, balancing, and supportive character of these realms but their "disjunctive" and contradictory character. Novak has transmuted Bell's descriptive framework into a normative one, presenting Bell's disjunctive realms as a happy ideal. He has also had to ignore one of Bell's own conclusions about the relationship of the realms: "Though capitalism and democracy historically have arisen together, and have been commonly justified by philosophical liberalism, there is nothing which makes it either theoretically or practically necessary for the two to be yoked."

● Novak's "systems" are not, in reality, the discrete and bounded entitities he suggests. In particular, the moral-cultural system does not parallel the other two systems.

This might be of academic interest were it not the moral-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cultural system with which Novak is preeminently concerned. Institutionally, the moral-cultural system includes government enterprises (public schools, scientific institutes, the courts and the law in their role as articulators of values). It also includes profit-making business ventures (the TV networks, the *New York Times*, *Playboy*, the *Reader's Digest*, Hollywood, and Madison Avenue). And it includes private non-profit institutions based on voluntary mass support (the churches, the Boy Scouts, the National Organization of Women) or on elite wealth sometimes combined with government grants (Harvard, the Committee on the Present Danger, the American Enterprise Institute). There is therefore no simple way to speak about the capacity of the moral-cultural system to balance the government and the private economy. Consider the withdrawal of federal funds from higher education. Does that render the university more independent of government? Does it make the university more reliant on corporate aid and large private fortunes? Or does it simply weaken the power of the university vis-à-vis both government and the economy? Does pluralism gain or lose if influence shifts from university- or media-based "adversary intellectuals" to those working for Pentagon-funded think tanks or receiving grants from Exxon and the SmithKline Corporation?

● Novak celebrates the idea that democratic capitalism demands adherence only to procedures and refrains from prescribing any ultimate values—at its moral core there is only an "empty shrine" which points to transcendence but does not define it. Novak imports a number of religious images into his political argument; the "empty shrine" is one that I find appropriate and moving. (Compare it with his repeated labeling of democratic capitalism in its three systems as "trinitarian"—as though anything in triplicate somehow carried a divine cachet.) But effective imagery does not resolve the many difficulties that theorists of pluralism have debated and Novak has stumbled upon. Can a society really cohere with an "empty shrine"—some would call it a moral vacuum—at its core? And will the shrine every really be empty—if there is nothing within, will not the trappings be worshiped instead? Procedural adherence implies substantive values; by overlooking this fact, don't we simply shelter those substantive values from examination, criticism, and renewal? These are not only theoretical questions; they lurk behind our fierce disputes over numerous practical matters: government policies toward schooling, families, work, wealth, the future of the environment. The problem is a tough one, and I don't complain that Novak's "empty shrine" is an inadequate solution. I only he wish he knew it.

● Novak never examines what exactly the relationship between pluralism and democracy might be; he never asks about pluralism *within* his three systems, nor about democracy within them.

Is a pluralist society automatically a democratic one? Contrary to Novak's sweeping and uninformed statements about "traditional societies" (a category that apparently lumps ancient Rome with Amazon tribes and medieval Europe), there have been societies that were pluralist, i.e., where power was divided and decentralized, without being democratic. Pluralism, like liberalism, appears to be, at least in the modern world, a necessary but not sufficient condition for democracy. Not only that, there are pluralisms and there are pluralisms. Pluralism *within* the broad sectors may be as important as a "balance" between them. "Government," for example, is not a monolith in the United States. The federal government's power is formally limited by the Constitution's division of powers, on top of which various agencies compete with one another for funds and influence. The federal government, in turn, shares power with the states, and power is finally splintered among a myriad of municipalities, counties, school boards, sanitation districts, and so on. Novak has pointed out that in 1978 "government" in the U.S. employed as many civilian workers as did all 500 top industrial corporations. He assumes that this shows a vast concentration of power on the government side, when in fact it may show just the opposite, those government employees being distributed not among five hundred but among tens of thousands of official units. Indeed it is the dramatic concentration of private power in the economy that took place in the decades before and after World War I and has continued at a slower but steady pace since then that is at the root of much of the corresponding growth in federal power and of today's government-business tensions. This "rise of large-scale enterprise," according to three historians of the American economy highly sympathetic to capitalism, "was the most significant change in the organization of economic decision-making since the development of market orientation and capitalist institutions." Yet of this transformation, and all its implications for pluralism, Novak has virtually nothing to say. He conveys the impression that big business is only a balance to big government, in no way its cause.

BENNE DOES DEAL with the issue of economic concentration and pluralism in the economy. He outlines Marxist, left-wing Keynesian, and Galbraithian arguments that the competitive market has given way to oligopoly and monopoly, and matches up the mainstream economists' rebuttals. Although "the critics . . . have grasped a measure of truth about the vast reality of the American market," he concludes, "it seems to me—admittedly from a lay point of view—that the mainstream viewpoint is persuasive on this matter of monopoly versus competition."

Benne recognizes, however, that this literature has been developed to answer questions about economic efficiency, not

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about political pluralism or democracy. His much briefer argument that government is not unduly controlled by concentrations of private economic power is more subjective and, to my mind, much weaker. Some of his evidence concerning regulations, anti-monopoly enforcement, and redistribution, has certainly been confounded by recent events. Even his logic seems to wobble a bit at this point. On one page, he grants that unlike Marxists who treat formal democracy as a "sham," democratic socialists like Michael Harrington, Galbraith, and "many compatriots in the intellectual subculture" believe that the democratic process, for all its shortcomings, does provide "protection from and leverage on private economic power." Their complaint, nonetheless, is that "government policy is still under *too much* control by oligopolists." One page later, in order to rebut this position more easily, he exaggerates it into a strawman: "It is untrue that public power fits *hand in glove* with the agenda of private corporations." (My emphasis in both quotations.)

Benne is content to rest his case on observations like, "It is remarkable how often the Democratic party is elected to govern when it is invariably opposed by the vast majority of large and small business concerns." Compare that with the statement of Samuel P. Huntington (no democratic socialist) that the president may be elected by one coalition but must govern by another: since World War II, this has meant seeking "the support and cooperation of key individuals and groups in the Executive Office, the federal bureaucracy, Congress, and the more important businesses, banks, law firms, foundations, and media, which constitute the private establishment." Benne's professorial detachment generally serves him well, but at this point it produces a vision of politics that is naive and antiseptic. In fact, the case he wants to make would require a much closer examination of the role of economic power in shaping, limiting, and, some would say, distorting the programs he holds out as evidence that American capitalism is duly subject to democratic constraints.

Just as Benne is more attentive than Novak to the question of economic concentration and pluralism, so too with the question of economic democracy — although their ultimate opinions are not far apart. Benne is skeptical of "industrial democracy," seeing in various schemes for workers' control a residue of socialist utopianism, and pointing out a number of practical objections. Nonetheless, he honors the concern for decentralization contained in these proposals and admits their attractiveness. "From our perspective [this alternative] certainly ought to be tried, if the arrangement can be shaped by voluntary agreement. But it ought to be experimented with as a test model for a long time." Novak is flatly dismissive: "To organize industry democratically would be a grave and costly error, since democratic procedures are not designed for productivity and efficiency."

Setting aside the crucial questions that would have occurred to an earlier Novak — what constitutes "productivity"? who defines "efficiency"? — this simply repeats, unawares, an ancient argument against *political* democracy, that government demands special capacities not attainable by the average individual but only by a trained elite. So thought Plato. And so thought the eighteenth-century pamphleteers who derided the idea of assembling "the tailors and the cobblers and the ploughmen and the shepherds" in order to "treat and resolve about matters of the highest importance of state"; and therefore concluded to the necessity of an independently wealthy, educated, and leisured governing class that could rise above the petty grasping of the multitudes. Citizens might occasionally govern themselves with success in small city-states, but "America is too unwieldy for the feeble, dilatory administration of democracy."

THE REFERENCE to eighteenth-century political pamphleteers is entirely apropos. In his tripartite map of "democratic capitalism," what Novak has constructed is, in fact, an analysis of the American "constitution" not in the sense of a written document or even an unwritten set of principles to which government must conform, but in the older sense of the existing pattern of institutions, laws, and practices that, with their animating principles and spirits, actually govern a society. Novak's analysis is analogous to that of the eighteenth-century thinkers who praised England's "mixed" constitution as "a system of consummate wisdom and policy." They, like him, divided society into three social orders — royalty, nobility, and "commons" — which had miraculously been brought into a splendid equilibrium that assured liberty, prosperity, and tranquillity. To depart in any way from that "dynamic balance," as Novak would call it, was to court disaster. Strengthen the monarchy and you risk tyranny; strengthen the nobles and you risk oligarchy; strengthen the commons and you risk anarchic democracy. It was, of course, the American political thinkers of the Revolutionary period who challenged this pretty scheme. America had always been bereft of a nobility, a troubling flaw in the tripartite "system." Now it was to be done with a monarch as well. How could liberty survive if there were no other social forces to balance the commons? Through trial and error and political genius, the Americans simply discovered that a new kind of pluralism was possible. The separation of powers, the federal system, and the

"Your recommendation, then, is that, until something better comes along, we work to build an image of corporate integrity."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

multiplicity of interests in a broad land could assure freedom at the same time as *all* political authority was derived from the "people."

Ironically, in identifying the preservation of liberty with the limited pluralism and alleged "balance" of three immutable orders, and in disregarding the possibility that liberty and pluralism could be strengthened by the democratizing of all the "systems," Novak hearkens back not to American revolutionaries but to their predecessors and adversaries. The odyssey of Michael Novak has indeed taken a peculiar turn: he has become an eighteenth-century British Tory.

THE IDEA of democratic capitalism, as I have said, is not new. It does not even date from the 1950s. In *The Liberal Tradition in America*, Louis Hartz traced "the idea of democratic capitalism" back to the 1840s, when Whig politicians decided to coopt rather than fight the Jacksonian mood of the nation. Political survival dictated that they trade in Hamiltonian disdain of the "mob" for capitalism with a Jeffersonian face. Declared one Whig politician: "Every American laborer can stand up proudly, and say, I AM THE AMERICAN CAPITALIST. . . ." The Whigs, wrote Hartz, did more than steal

> the egalitarian thunder of the Democrats. They transformed it. For if they gave up Hamilton's hatred of the people, they retained his grandiose dreams, and this they combined with the Jeffersonian concept of equal opportunity. The result was to electrify the democratic individual with a passion for great achievement and to produce a personality type that was neither Hamiltonian nor Jeffersonian but a strange mixture of them both: the hero of Horatio Alger.

What Hartz termed "The New Whiggery: Democratic Capitalism" was ideologically triumphant, especially in the post-Civil War era. It was so in part because it responded to a genuine openness and opportunity in American society; but also because it successfully exploited both American nationalism and the hold that "Lockean dogmatism" had on the American mind. The profound reflections of a Jefferson or a Tocqueville on differences between the New and Old Worlds were transmuted into common ideology by the Andrew Carnegies and the purveyors of the Gospel of Wealth. "It is as if a thousand chamber of commerce epigoni suddenly appeared in the great tradition of American criticism, reducing insight to platitude, transforming philosophy into the complacent after-dinner speech." But "in addition to the golden charm of Horatio Alger," the new Whiggery had "a second weapon" with which to isolate or emasculate its ideological rivals: "It tried to frighten the American democrat . . . tried to precipitate, as it were, an internal moral crisis whenever he turned to the instrument of the state. And the best way of doing this was to call him a 'socialist' which, of course, was to make him perfectly 'un-American.' "

If Novak's particular theory of pluralism is a throwback to eighteenth-century Toryism, his overall ideological enterprise is reminiscent of Hartz's "new Whiggery." *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* cannot be read apart from today's political and economic context, in which an uneasy corporate leadership has seen the wisdom of wrapping its power in the bunting of democracy and religion — or, as Mr. Stockman's aide advised, the importance of appropriating for its own authority the "moral buzz words" of its critics. Ironically, to the extent that the most effective forces of opposition to that earlier "democratic capitalism" of Andrew Carnegie and Horatio Alger — that is, the Progressives, the populists, the trade unions — were able to survive the taint of "socialism" and to institutionalize some limits on private economic power, Novak can now celebrate their victories as part of the "dynamic balance" of the system. And if the evil "new class" of Novak's (and Benne's) current account should win a few victories over corporate power, no doubt some facile Novak of the future will hail that fact, too, as evidence of the genius of democratic capitalism.

Benne has taken far more precautions against the ideological use of his arguments and authority. He puts genuine demands on democratic capitalism, and I am persuaded he means them. In a Preface dated May 1981, he notes that the manuscript was finished too early to address President Reagan's policies, but that he finds them "deficient in their concern for justice." These are policies that Novak has defended fervently.

In the end, of course, Benne, like Novak (and like my criticism, too), must be read in the context of this ideological struggle. As Novak himself once insisted, in *All the Catholic People:* "Every theological word — faith, despair, freedom, community, identity, integrity, love, guilt, redemption — depends for its concrete significance upon the social and political context in which it is uttered."

BUT THERE IS still another way of reading these two books. They are conversion stories. And even, or especially, the reader who is unsympathetic to these authors' briefs for democratic capitalism ought at least to take this dimension of the story to heart. Like all conversions, theirs have no doubt been complicated affairs. But it is obvious that one major factor in their conversions has been intellectual and moral revulsion from the ignorance, shallowness, dogmatism, and self-satisfaction that deform so much of left-liberal argument, and which they have encountered among religious activists.

Before critics of democratic capitalism gloat over the weaknesses to be found in a book like Novak's they should face the fact that the same faults abound in the political literature of the religious left. Questionable statistics are thrown about like proof-texts. Concepts like exploitation and imperialism are brandished without inquiry into their precise meaning and applicability. Crude theories of economics and international relations are accepted as self-evident. The specific arguments of opposing theorists are ignored or dismissed as morally compromised.

I do not want to propose an airy, impossible standard for political debate. Obviously, there is not world enough and time for a dispassionate and learned analysis of every problem,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nor would such a response be necessarily appropriate. We cannot, in practice, maintain a "single standard." We give the benefit of the doubt to someone, place the burden of proof on someone else. It makes sense to do so in favor of the powerless, the underdogs, the immediate victims. But there must be checks on such a preference. Novak, too, has always seen himself as speaking for the inarticulate underdog, first student radicals, then ethnics, and now the Fortune 500. However implausible an "underdog" the latter may seem to those who don't judge worldly power by popularity ratings in Ivy League faculty clubs, I think that Novak's excesses in *all* these causes have their roots in his belief that he is representing neither himself nor the truth but some inarticulate group that deserves its day in court. How many of us have done the same, have quelled our doubts and put the best face on the principles or practices of some group — pacifist demonstrators, third-world liberationists, left-wing lobbyists — because "they deserve to be heard?" After a while, we all become lawyers, a fate worse than death.

If there is anything that would serve the religious left well in this uncertain area — and that is currently wanting — it is precisely that historical sense I find absent in Novak — that refusal to yield to enthusiasm over claims that have not been set against the shadowed tapestry of the past. For too many Christian pacifists, the world seems to have skipped from St. Augustine's devising of the just-war theory to Vietnam; if they are interested in the intervening centuries it is mainly to cull Bad Examples. Christian advocates of liberation and revolution often write as though the twentieth century were something which they had vaguely heard about but which doesn't very much interest them. They acknowledge that the left has made its mistakes, but they are not going to waste much grief and intelligence in pondering exactly what those mistakes were and how they came to be made. Awareness of the tangled threads of history may induce despair or indifferentism; that is its danger. But it can also substitute steady and knowing passion for the kind of skittish infatuation found as frequently on the religious left as in *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*.

ONE OF THE CURIOSITIES of Benne's and Novak's conversion stories is that in reacting to their religious and academic backgrounds, they should use democratic socialism as a foil. Democratic socialism is not exactly a looming presence in American politics. The Democratic Socialists of America, which operates largely within the Democratic party, has members who hold office in state legislatures, city governments, and the U.S. Congress, and is on good terms with a significant segment of the labor movement, can boast about nine thousand members, a respectable number indeed but hardly a shadow when compared with, say, the Moral Majority. While a good many academics and religious activists would be content to see the U.S. move in a democratic socialist direction, few of them would identify themselves — even anonymously — as socialists rather than liberals or radicals. My guess is that they somehow view democratic socialism as a natural extension of American principles and the most thoroughgoing critique of the shortcomings of American practice. At the same time, democratic socialism remains something far too cloudy to gain their active adherence. When all is said and done, most members of the "new class," if they are left-of-center at all, are most accurately described in terms of populism, Progressivism, or old-fashioned muckraking — all distinctively American reactions to the emergence of big capitalism, and all ignored by Novak and Benne.

As Hartz points out, the ideology of democratic capitalism has always known the effectiveness of labeling opponents as socialists; but I would like to think that the attention Novak and Benne devote to democratic socialism reflects their recognition of its intellectual and moral seriousness. Conversion, after all, may lead to a certain clarity about the competing faiths. As usual, Benne does the fairer job. Although Novak must know that the commitment of democratic socialists to pluralism and their historical record of opposing totalitarianism can stand comparison with that of any other group, he constantly muddles this fact. Repeatedly, he assimilates democratic socialism to a general category of "socialism" obviously modeled on Communism.

If one can stomach this misrepresentation, there is a good deal in both books that those attracted to democratic socialism (among whom I include myself) should note with profit. Much more democratic socialist thought has been given to the question of markets than either author appears to realize. (One of the editors of *Socialist Review*, a journal quite a bit to my own left, recently told an interviewer that the market is "a fairly efficient mode of transacting a lot of business. Where it doesn't work, I would revamp it. I even think that the market and democracy are somewhat inseparable.") Nonetheless, these books challenge democratic socialists to clarify their attitude toward markets further, not only in terms of economic efficiency but of individual psychology and political culture.

Both books also endorse the classical liberal (and perhaps Christian) position that private life is superior to public life. In effect, they question whether the intensity of political activity demanded by democratic socialism would really result in a more human existence.

Finally, Novak's entire book (although not Benne's) is a paean to the entrepreneurial personality. One would think from reading him — and the pop economics of George Gilder — that the country was populated almost entirely by people starting small computer firms rather than women working for decades at office machines, men driving buses, and blue-collar or white-collar employees of large private or public bureaucracies. But what Novak and Gilder render in fantastic form nonetheless hits upon a void in democratic socialist thought and tradition. Is entrepreneurial ambition only an aggressive form of capitalist individualism? Is the remarkable percentage of ordinary working people who at some time in their lives manage to get into business for themselves (often briefly and with unhappy consequences) only a pathetic grasping at petty bourgeois illusions? Organizational talent and persistence have been honored by democratic socialism when they were expressed in the labor movement. Scientific discovery has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been hailed because it was "progressive" and, in theory, part of a universally shared fund of knowledge. Entrepreneurship, however, has been seen only in the context of a will to power and a drive for personal accumulation. Yet the entrepreneurial impulse is far more widespread and more worthy of respect than democratic socialist thought, rooted in an historical concern for the industrial working class, has acknowledged.

AS A GENERAL RULE, political books are read by the wrong people. Too few religious activists of anti-capitalist or democratic socialist bent will be challenged to meet the objections put forth by Novak and Benne; too few will recognize in these conversion stories a testimony to the left's own delinquencies. On the other hand, too many readers of the *Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, and *Business Week* will only find these books (more so in Novak, less in Benne) a useful lesson in the "moral buzz words" and a reassuring reason to ignore the disturbing tremors of social criticism that have been emanating from the churches.

In the end, of course, we must not substitute allegiance to any of our "isms" for the goals we want to serve. If I were convinced that the best way of putting bread in the mouths of the hungry, of combating the despair, disarray, and human destruction of modern life, lay in embracing Novak's Reaganism with a theological face or Benne's more welfare-oriented managerial capitalism, then I would do so gladly. I have not been convinced.

Media

THE VANISHING FAMILY

MIRRORING THE SUCCESSFUL SELF

TRIVIA QUIZ, medium-level difficulty: What do Frank Furillo, Ken Reeves, and Mary Richards have in common?

First answer: they are all creations of MTM productions ("Hill Street Blues," "The White Shadow," and "The Mary Tyler Moore Show"), which is to say they are all creations, in a sense, of Grant Tinker, former head of programing. The *auteur* theory of film held that an individual film is the "work," the individual expression and projection, above all of its director. But television is not a director's medium. The sheer complexity of churning out a weekly TV series guarantees that it is really a *producer's* medium, and that the producer, if he is serious and canny enough, is the *auteur* of a great TV series as surely as Orson Welles is the "author" of *Citizen Kane*. And no producer fits better this standard of artistic consistency than Tinker.

Second answer: they are all characters whose "private" lives are malnourished, or broken, or vapid. Mary Richards was a virgin (or, at least, a very careful single girl) whose real family was the whimsical personnel of the newsroom she worked in. Ken Reeves, the basketball coach of "The White Shadow," was a New York/Catholic middle-aged/innocent whose life away from the court seemed bounded by TV dinners and an occasional, tense date. And Furillo, the beleaguered precinct captain of "Hill Street," is a recovering alcoholic who is divorced from his first, neurotic wife and is involved in a heated, but terminally grown-up affair with a Public Defender (lots of bathtub scenes, that is, but—alas—no illusions). The *auteur* theory insists that great directors establish certain perennial themes in the diverse material of the films (e.g., family solidarity in John Ford, Catholic guilt in Alfred Hitchcock). And along these lines, too, Tinker's productions take on the shape of a sustained work. His shows are among the best expressions we have of the post-industrial, de-familized American self-image: a culture that finds "the job" a more congenial, more supportive context for living than "the family." Tinker, in other words, is among the chief pallbearers for the myth of the happy home that reaches from the greatest novels of Dickens to "Leave It to Beaver."

Third answer (extra points for this one): they are all characters who represent an important, maybe a crucial, social and ethical reorientation in the American idea of the "successful self."

Remember "I Love Lucy"? "Ozzie and Harriet"? "The Dick Van Dyke Show"? These series— and any number of others—tended to assume the sanctity of the family environment, the surmountability of all problems given enough love, and above all the centrality of the home as the *scene* of important conflict and resolution. Ricky would always forgive Lucy for disguising herself and auditioning for his new show, Ozzie would always discover that David and Ricky hadn't really stayed too long at the school dance, Rob Petrie would always find the script he thought he had lost on the subway. These shows were important constituents of the way we thought about ourselves; they were, in a sense, part of our national mythology; and their point was, again and again, that potential disasters arising *outside* the home could always be defused *inside* the home, inside the atomic family unit. The Roman Curia couldn't have argued it better.

But all that is no more. These shows, for all their frequent brilliance, seem impossibly dated now. (And "Ozzie and Harriet," especially, *was* brilliant: imagine Harold Pinter dialogue with a Jerry Falwell sensibility.) And they seem dated, I think, mainly because we don't think of ourselves that way anymore. They are like Egyptian paintings or eighteenth-century epistolary novels, only all the more alien because they should be so close to us. Looking at them, we ask: did people *really* think of themselves that way? and so recently?

In the MTM productions I have mentioned, it is the job, the work area, that is the crucial scene of conflict and resolution, and not the home environment. And there is also "M*A*S*H*," and there is also "Taxi," and there is this season's best new comedy, "Cheers"—and there was, until

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CBS decided to knuckle under to political pressure, "Lou Grant." All of them involve characters to whom work—the office, the hospital, the dispatcher's shed—is the truly human context of their lives. In the lives of these characters, in other words, what sociologists call the "expanded family" has expanded to the point where it actually displaces the "natural" family altogether.

It is interesting, in this respect, to compare two of the successful family-oriented shows of the last few years: "Eight Is Enough" and "Little House on the Prairie." "Eight Is Enough," starring Dick Van Patten (who began his acting career, these many years ago, as son Nils in the classic "I Remember Mama"), was a relatively intelligent, sometimes very fine series about the difficulties of raising a family of eight children. But the center plot device was that Van Patten, the father of the family, was a widower. The family unit, in other words, was ruptured; and even after Van Patten's character remarried, much of the show had to do with the difficulty of *maintaining* the healing home situation. Michael Landon's saccharine and essentially dishonest "Little House," on the other hand, is a series of almost overwhelming family solidarity, connubial health, and patriarchal platitude. And it is set in the America of the late nineteenth century: perhaps the only honest detail of the show. For that time-setting is an admission that the myth being celebrated *is* a myth; that the smarmily reassuring environment of "Little House" can only be imagined, without irony, in the irrecoverable fabular past of frontier America, or of the fifties.

But what does it all mean? Is Grant Tinker, for all his brilliance as a producer, simply the leading articulator of the death of the American family? Are the best shows on TV only the afterglow—as dead fish are said to phosphorescent—of a moribund ideal?

We are, I think, living through a curious period of readjustment in our mental history; call it the period of the redefinition of the self's landscape.

Suddenly we find that our jobs matter as much, or more than, our homelife. Suddenly we find that the extended contacts we make with our co-workers can mean as much to us as the intimate contacts of the home. Suddenly we discover, in other words, that "friendship" and "love" are *not* mutually exclusive terms.

Phillipe Aries, in *Centuries of Childhood*, and Tony Tanner, in *Adultery in the Novel*, have traced definitively the growth and decline of the idea of "the family." And Tanner, especially, points out how the growth of the industrial and post-industrial city, the complication of social and economic relationships, eventually led to the opening of killer fissures—fault-lines, as a Californian would say—in the ideal of the home as the real locale of the psyche.

Nor is this altogether a shame. The TV mythology we repeat to ourselves has, in "Hill Street Blues," "Lou Grant," and other shows, caught up with the way we actually live, and try to organize our lives. In terms of the increasingly problematic nature of the family, Mary Richards is one of the godchildren of Madame Bovary: caught between the tensions of familial role and social contract. And the remarkable thing about this evolution is that it makes the family more, rather than less important: as all endangered species take on a special kind of fascination. If our *real* lives are increasingly connected to a wider and wider circle of people; if our passions and our hopes are more and more connected with society at large, rather than with the sacrosanct fiction of the home as castle, then the home becomes more crucial precisely as it becomes more *competitive* for a creative function in our lives. Ken Reeves, Mary Richards, Frank Furillo, Lou Grant, etc., don't *have* home lives shown on the screen. And, like the murderer in a detective story, the idea of a home life becomes all the more present in these shows for being so carefully hidden, so visibly obscured.

Sociologists have been telling us for decades now, in their customary prophetic tone, that TV endangers the togetherness of the family. All those moms and dads and children gathered around the storytelling tube, staring at it and not speaking to one another: it can't be healthy. But the irony is that what the tube *shows* those families, increasingly these days, is precisely the dismantling of the home-myth. The tube, in other words, is neither a lens nor a window. It is, in the deepest sense, a mirror. And we gaze into its melodramatic fantasies to see — disturbingly but also importantly — the wraithlike shadows of our own discontent. FRANK McCONNELL

(Frank McConnell is a member of the English Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara.)

Screen

AFRICAN MELTDOWN

MAD DOGS & FRENCHMEN

I ONCE SPENT a little time in Nigeria. One night while I was there, an Englishman who had lived in Africa many years — an old "coasthand," as they said — came out of his club on Lagos Harbor and got into his car. He'd had no more to drink than he did every evening when he dropped by the men's bar after dinner. He backed his car out of the parking space, swung around, and drove straight into the harbor, where he drowned, still sitting erect with his hands on the wheel, in about fifteen feet of water. It was a simple matter of having turned left when he came out of his parking space instead of right, as he had each night for years. A silly mistake. Anyone could have made it. They had a special word for Englishmen who made mistakes like that in Nigeria, however. "Wawa." The bloke had gone "wawa." The English residents would tell naive visitors in hushed senses that this term was a native one, from an ancient tribal language — a juju word. But the truth was that it was British slang, an acronym for "West Africa Wins Again."

It was universally acknowledged that going "wawa" was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not always self-destructive. The result was not necessarily ambiguous suicide. It could be a way to survive as well as perish, a saving accommodation one made to the climate, the conditions and the inevitable depression Europeans feel when stuck in some colonial backwater. Judging from Bertrand Tavernier's new film, *Coup de Torchon*, this form of mental illness was equally widespread in French West Africa.

Set in Senegal in the late 1930s, the film is about Lucien Cordier (Philippe Noiret), who is the policeman in a small town. The heat in this place is enough to melt all decorum and civility. One bad-tempered local constantly beats his wife (Isabelle Huppert) in public, without even caring whether Lucien is standing there helpless and embarrassed. Lucien's own wife (Stephane Audran) has living with them right in their home a man she says is her "brother," whom she pampers, strokes, and nuzzles all day long. The local pimp humiliates Lucien in front of everybody, too, and when Lucien complains to his superior — because, Lucien tells the man, "I thought and thought and thought, and decided I didn't know what to do" — the superior kicks Lucien right up the arse, to show him what to do. Lucien's lot in life seems to be symbolized by the eyesore that sits in the courtyard of his apartment building directly below his own balcony — an outhouse with a half a dozen stalls, and no roof.

It's no wonder that someone who lives in a world as wawa as this goes a little wawa himself at times, and shoots somebody. Or else, he tricks these loathsome types he's surrounded with into shooting each other. We can't help but admire Lucien, even if he is cracking up in his quiet way. By playing the dolt all the time, he outsmarts everyone else at their own, venal games. He's the last one anybody would suspect of being able to get rid of all his enemies like this, to say nothing of his friends. Besides, nobody seems to care about their disappearance, or even notice it. The body of one of his victims lies out on the beach for, it seems, weeks. Lucien and the hapless fellow's wife, who is also Lucien's mistress, visit it one day, driving out in a little pony cart as if going on a picnic. Later another body lies right under the noses of an entire detachment of soldiers and their colonel, who chats with Lucien, then marches his men away without noticing that someone is there bleeding to death. These people are all obviously a bit on the wawa side as well.

Actually, the story this movie tells doesn't concern Africa at all. That's the craziest thing about it. Tavernier and veteran French screenwriter Jean Aurenche have based their script on *Pop. 1280*, a novel by an American writer, Jim Thompson, that's set in the southern United States. Oh well, it's a like culture. And *Coup* makes the psychopathology it details feel universal. It does so by showing the whole world it contains as if through the eyes of Lucien. The erratic behavior, the quirks of perception and the odd, sudden, unexpected shifts of mood that we see in him infect the entire society in which he lives. The only difference between him and the rest is that he's subtle where they're crude, he's devious where they're obvious, etc. It's pure pleasure to watch him get the upper hand in a world so petty and dizzy. Like *A Good Man in Africa*, the recent first novel by William Boyd, *Coup de Torchon* is a splendidly antic account of the colonial life. COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

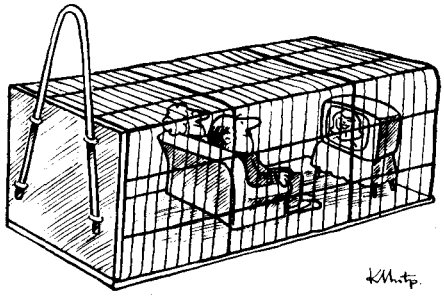
Books: TV, CONSCIOUSNESS, & CONTROL

MEDIA
THE SECOND GOD
Tony Schwartz
Random House, $13.50, 206 pp.

THE ELECTRONIC GIANT
A CRITIQUE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS FROM A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE
Stewart M. Hoover
Brethen Press, $6.95, 171 pp.

SIGN OFF
THE LAST DAYS OF TELEVISION
Edwin Diamond
MIT Press, $17.50, 273 pp.

MEDIA AND THE AMERICAN MIND FROM MORSE TO McLUHAN
Daniel J. Czitrom
Univ. of North Carolina, $19.95, 285 pp.



Marie Augusta Neal

THE TV RITUAL
WORSHIP AT THE VIDEO ALTAR
Gregor T. Goethals
Beacon Press, $7.25, 164 pp.

MEDIA UNBOUND
THE IMPACT OF TELEVISION JOURNALISM ON THE PUBLIC
Stephen Lesher
Houghton Mifflin, $13.95, 285 pp.

BROADCAST JOURNALISM
THE EIGHTH ALFRED I. DUPONT/ COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SURVEY
Edited by Marvin Barrett
Everest House, $15.95, 266 pp.

BARRINGTON MOORE, lecturing in the mid-fifties, pointed out that there are five bases of power in modern industrial society: control over land, labor, industry and trade, the unknown, and over violence. The first two were dominant in pre-industrial societies; the last two are dominant today. Before the development of modern science and technology, religion prevailed in control over the un-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

known. Today, perceptually, science shares that field with religion and the new power is in the technology of electronic media. Books about media recognize the validity of this claim to power in media of communication. Each tests claims to power and speaks from the perspective of different experiences: Goethals is an artist; Schwartz a TV and radio commercials designer; Hoover, an ethicist; Lesher, Barrett, and Diamond, social scientists; and Czitrom, an historian.

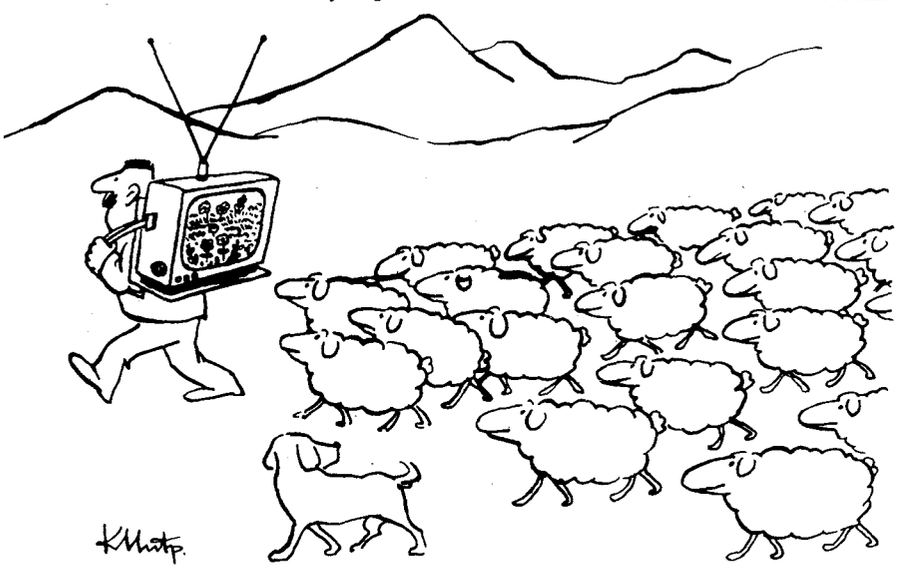
Tony Schwartz is by far the most optimistic. His book has the compelling qualities of his ads. He speaks boldly: "God is all-knowing and all-powerful. He is a spirit, not a body, and He exists both outside us and within us. God is always with us because He is everywhere. We can never fully understand Him because He works in mysterious ways. In broad terms this describes the God of our fathers, but it also describes electronic media, the second god, which man has created." His book abounds with similar claims expressed in such language.

Schwartz knows TV behavior-changing potential because his ads sell products. He locates this power in the fact that TV travels so fast, can be shared by millions at the same time, and requires accountability because of its video tape capacity for instant replay, "one of the most important developments of human history." It allows no public act to go unexamined. A ten-minute replay of a decade of statements made by a public figure can make or break his career in its revelation of contradiction or continuity. Schwartz claims that more important than political party support is a televised session of Congress. TV can teach a child about societies cross-culturally, increase vocabulary, encourage reading. It can replace the family doctor. It has already moved the church to put the liturgy into English; turned the priest to face the people; fostered ecumenism. It has now, through the influence of the Moral Majority's use of paid TV time, turned religion into one of the largest buyers of viewing time. Schwartz invites us not to try to resist the media — TV, radio, and telephone — but to recognize its disembodied spirit and fashion its uses to our interests and needs.

In striking contrast, Hoover's *Electronic Giant* is a quietly didactic book that broods over the limitations of TV news in comparison to the printed word. It notes that the whole of the CBS evening news, including the ads, would fit on the front page of the *New York Times*. Further, current TV showings fail to reflect positive social values. Hoover points out that although a concerned public could pressure the Federal Communications Commission to regulate in the public interest, the advertisers are more effectively organized to get regulations in their interests. The nations with satellite control, he observes, will ultimately decide what is said and seen. He is fascinated by the technology itself and tries to communicate to the reader what it is and how it works. Hoover worries that control of media will revert to fewer and fewer corporations, ultimately excluding Third World countries from presenting their point of view.

Lesher's *Media Unbound* focuses on the very nature of journalism itself and tries to demonstrate that "it leads to error or at least to inaccurate information with a bias toward the unusual and sensational." It has deeply influenced American thinking on such main issues as the morality of the Vietnam war. He presents the striking thesis that Walter Cronkite's judgment that the Vietnam war was wrong, announced on TV in 1968, had more influence on the public than the decisions made in the White House. He further observes that *60 Minutes*, which is really not news but rather semi-drama, is far more popular than the unadorned news.

Diamond, Barrett, Czitrom, and Goethals consider the evidence that the coming of cable TV marks the end of an era of broadcasting and the beginning of something new, the move from mass audience to specialty publics with more control over selection on the part of the viewer. The books of these authors review the previous era, assessing it in preparation for a hidden future. Diamond examines the last ten years with his MIT seminar students, who analyze the content of video cassette recordings of a decade of broadcasting to determine the influence of TV and other media on the making of important decisions. His evidence leads him to conclude that TV does not have the influence claimed by some to replace personal initiative or genuine leadership. The tapes reviewed include presidential debates, political commercials, religious broadcasts, news and documentaries, children's programs, the media coverage of major special events including election nights, Mideast wars, and major disasters like Three Mile Island. Diamond sees TV turning news into a spectacular which entertains. *Night Line*, the *Today Show, Good Morning America, 60 Minutes*, and *20/20* become shows. Attending to the turn of the prime time preachers in 1979 into the politically powerful Moral Majority, he notes the effectiveness of



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fundamentalism focused on the character flaws of opposed political candidates. He analyzes the skill of such presenters who use TV's potential for creating solidarity by taking advantage of people's "spiritual hunger," and desire for entertainment. He provides an index of every TV preacher: audience, receipts, and show.

From Barrett's perspective, we see through a glass darkly when we hear and view the TV news. Only if a network decides to pour an enormous amount of money and personnel into the coverage of an event, and that usually at the risk of the withdrawal of advertisers, does a TV journalist team manage to cut through the cultural bias that distorts our vision of other nations and other subcultures within our own. After a brilliant ABC report of the Iranian hostage story, he exposes government and journalist deficiencies, noting: "Such a barrage of criticism took on added weight when one considers that Iran was only one among dozens of countries in both hemispheres that Americans were seeing dimly and partially, countries large and small, remote and close by, and any one of which could like Iran become overnight the gateway to global disaster." This reflection follows his recounting that, at the time of the fall of the Shah, we were ignorant of the Iranian people, their customs, their religion, and their feelings. Prior to the taking of the hostages, the Shah was, for most of us, Iran. Barrett soberly reflects on his findings from the polls and, after reviewing the video records, concludes that being told the story does not determine the response. The splendid documentary, *Harvest of Shame,* presented in 1960, made little difference in the condition of the farm workers in 1980. So too *All Deliberate Speed;* though an excellent documentary, it did not change the bias of race discrimination much either. Barrett concludes then that media, though a significant source of information feelingly presented, do not singly lead to transforming action for good.

Czitrom's book is a careful history of wireless, telephone, and radio. It becomes essential reading — after one becomes familiar with the whole story of broadcasting, cable videotape, and satellite which the previous books recount. To demystify the process, the historical perspective of this volume fills in the background. He too sees the aspirations to transcendence embodied in the media expressions as early as the beginning of the telegraph story in the nineteenth century, when one of his sources proclaims: "The divine boon of the telegraph allowed man [sic] to become more godlike."

All of these books pose the question of power. Who controls what we perceive through TV? Goethals's book, best read in meditative perspective on the problems the others have singled out and tried to answer, ponders the influence and limits of TV as a popular culture-carrier with the power to reinforce uncritical religion that has grown out of our already formed popular culture. Her book is an attempt to retest theses about the binding elements of religion: ritual, icon and iconoclasm, and sacrament. She notes that we are all "sacramental creatures." The only way in which primitive societies differ from ours in shaping the folk religion of today is that the medium is new — TV — and the public is larger — the nation rather than the tribe or family. Goethals locates the secularity of American rituals and icons in the historical fact that our founding groups were Protestant. Religious expression therefore took the form of word and music; the visual was repudiated as idolatrous. Hence art took on the quality of the secular in the American experience and our icons — the family, nature, and technology — became visually secular. Business and politics have learned to use the ritual and sacramental potential of secular American art through television in advertisements, documentaries, and entertainment. Institutional religion, however, has not yet accepted this challenge, though the people are gathered around the video altar.

Hence its inviation: "Theologies and faiths that confine their expression to the word, written or spoken, and to music have issued an invitation to secular culture to minister to the sacramental needs of people, Secular culture is popular not because it is secular but because it is sacramental."

"A splendid biography of a marvellously complicated and uniquely gifted man."
—Madeleine L'Engle

"More than sixty books have been written on Chesterton, and this, the first full-length biography since Maisie Ward's *Life* of 1943, is one of the few indispensable ones."
—Aidan Mackey, Author, *Mr. Chesterton Comes to Tea*

"**What a refreshing book! What a delight**...This may have started out to be an outline of sanity; it has ended as a solid body of common sense."
—William Furlong, St. Francis College

"Dale brings together and makes accessible, in a lively and readable form, a wealth of information about Chesterton's life and vast literary output."—Ian Boyd, Editor, *The Chesterton Review*

"**A balanced, objective portrait** that sees Chesterton over the years, against his social and political background...A splendid book."
—John Sullivan, K.S.G.
President, The Chesterton Society

Cloth, $18.95

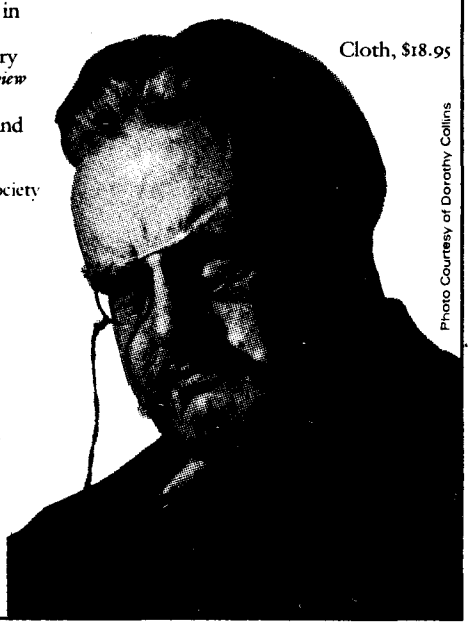


Photo Courtesy of Dorothy Collins

The Outline of Sanity
A Life of G.K. Chesterton
ALZINA STONE DALE

A Selection of The Catholic Book Club and The Conservative Book Club.

At your bookstore, or write:
WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. 49503

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Claiming that we all have a need to belong and to wonder, Goethals uses some of the best standard cultural analysis sources: Durkheim, Geertz, Bellah, Berger, and Ernest Becker to analyze her data, frames from live TV of news reports, soap opera, documentaries, and popular shows. These frames, chosen with an artist's eye, are incorporated into her text. They demonstrate, through visuals, how folk religion comes to be and why the public responds to this visual pressure. Goethals ends with this challenge: "until institutional religion can excite the serious play of the soul and evoke the fullness of human passion, television will nurture our illusions of heroism and self-transcendence."

If you can afford only one book, begin with Goethals. If you are building a library, then choose them all and experience a rich reflection on the transcendent power of the media.

Sign of comfort & contradiction

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN
HIS LIFE AND WORK
Brian Martin
Oxford, $19.95, 160 pp.

Clyde F. Crews

TWENTY WINTERS — of frequently dreary discontent — have now passed since the autumn of 1962. In that same year, Meriol Trevor published her two monumental and perceptive volumes on the life of John Henry Newman, the figure often invoked as the "invisible spirit" of the Council.

Two decades after the epochal event began, Newman may now prove to be a prophet of post-conciliar uncertainty and turmoil as well. His life was laden with ambitious plans, most of them ground down to inconsequence by the force of events and squabbling personalities. Consider what the future cardinal entered in his journal for January 21, 1863:

> This morning, when I woke, the feeling that I was cumbering the ground came on me so strongly that I could not get myself to go for my shower bath. I said . . . what am I living for? What am I doing for any religious end? . . . As a Protestant I felt my religion dreary, but not my life; but as a Catholic, my life dreary, not my religion.

Brian Martin, teacher of English at Pembroke College, Oxford, has produced a credible portrayal of Newman as a man often besieged, sometimes weary, but always resilient. He appears as one committed to the bringing of order and kindliness into societal and ecclesial confusion.

One learns little that is new from Martin's telling of the Newman story. For more comprehensive and well-wrought biographies of this venerable figure, one still turns to Bouyer, Trevor, Walgrave, or Ward. But this text was intended as a literate introduction coupled with a generous presentation of historic photographs. In this limited scope, Martin has done his work fairly well.

Born with the century in 1801, John Henry experienced his first intense evangelical experience at age fifteen. He went to Oxford and was ordained for the Church of England. An ambitious young man, Newman got entangled in academic and theological affairs, most notably the Oxford Movement. This theological expression of romanticism began in 1833 and brought him into league with some very keen minds: Pusey, Froude, and Keble (on whom Mr. Martin produced an earlier study).

In his Oxford study of early Christian heresies, Newman became convinced that the Roman church alone had stood its ground through the centuries, while also displaying flexibility. Amid a great furor, he entered the Church of Rome in 1845. So devout was his general confession that he began it in the evening and continued it on the following day. Newman became a Roman priest and founder of the Oratory in England.

Now began the trials and disillusionments that Martin manages to portray succinctly. In 1853, for example, Newman was forced to stand trial and fined on a charge of libeling Giacinto Achilli, a rabidly anti-Catholic orator. Newman's affiliation with the new Catholic University of Ireland in this same period proved short-lived, a misfortune nearly from start to finish.

Also in the mid 1850s, dissension surfaced among the Oratorians in Newman's charge. Chief agitator was Frederick (Fr. Wilfrid) Faber, as temperamentally different from his superior as it was possible to be. Faber, incidentally, a consummate complainer and hypochondriac, once drank a mixture of water and three hairs from a dead Brother's head in the hope of a miraculous cure for one of his endless ills. He also liked to refer to the Blessed Virgin as "Dear Mama." Newman preferred the title "St. Mary."

By the 1860s the battle lines were being drawn between a tolerant, inquiring Catholicism, represented by such men as Newman and Acton; and a more intransigent, ultramontane faith championed by Manning and W. G. Ward. As early as 1859, Newman had taken over the *Rambler*, a journal aimed at an intellectual approach to the faith. He was pressured out of such leadership almost at once for his article "On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine."

The embattled Oratorian from Birmingham passed up an opportunity to attend the First Vatican Council in 1869-70, though he opposed the infallibility doctrine, not in its ultimate formulation, but for what he considered its inopportuneness. He likened the definition to lightning from a cloudless sky. And to disendear him from the authoritarians even more, he opposed the temporal power of the papacy and failed to lament its passing in 1870.

Yet, for Newman's commitments to moderation, development, and intellectual honesty, there was to be vindication. It came when Leo XIII honored the old

CORRECTION: The 86th and 87th Charter members in the 1982 Associates list published in our January 14th issue should have read John P. Mollooly, M.D., Editor, *Linacre Quarterly*, Milwaukee and Joseph E. Murray, M.D., Wellesley Hills, Mass. Our apologies.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

man with the cardinalate in 1879, even though Cardinal Manning apparently employed high-handed tactics to prevent the honor.

In drawing a picture of the Newman personality, Martin is careful and correct. Of special merit is a concluding essay on the literary worth of Newman's immense output. Besides such major works as the *Apologia* (1864), and *The Grammar of Assent* (1870), this master of English style also managed to publish popular novels — an occasional clerical pastime then as now.

Martin is perhaps at his weakest in not elucidating more the tumultuous political, social, and theological times of his subject. Newman seemed set down in his age to be a sign of challenge, comfort, and contradiction. This case could have been more forcefully made; still, we are dealing with an introduction of modest length.

Meriol Trevor once wrote that Newman — from a bishop's point of view — was the equivalent of a time bomb in a diocese. Yet, he was that cherished and rare species: a literate conservative who embraced development and change for the sake of the Gospel. He was a struggler for the intellectual respectability of the ancient faith in the modern age, and for the renewal of pastoral life at all its levels — with special care for the rights of the laity.

Once, Newman was called in by Bishop William Ullathorne who wished to know precisely who were these laity that Newman so frequently was championing. Who are they, Newman repeated? "The church would look foolish without them."

Face of God, face of Blake

THE HUMAN FACE OF GOD
WILLIAM BLAKE AND THE BOOK OF JOB
Kathleen Raine
Thames and Hudson, $35, 320 pp.

Leonard W. Deen

THE HUMAN FACE OF GOD provides a centrifugal commentary on William Blake's Job in twenty-two short chapters—each an excursus on one of Blake's plates. The result is a richly informed account of Blake's whole "system."

One of Blake's peculiarities is "identifying" art and religion, as in the teeming "Laocoön" plate: "Art is the Tree of Life God is Jesus." "Jesus & his Apostles & Disciples were all Artists." "A Poet a Painter a Musician an Architect: the Man or Woman who is not one of these is not a Christian." This gives us the choice of treating his work as Gospel or Art or both. The center of *The Human Face of God* is filled with one hundred twenty-nine reproductions of Blake's painting and graphic work (often several on a page)—twenty-two of which are full-page Job plates. But Kathleen Raine does not attend to Blake's "Minute Particulars" or "discriminate & particular lines" aesthetically as much as intellectually—as signs of Blake's thought and belief. She is of course less "literary critic" or art historian than mythologist or comparative religionist like Joseph Campbell and Mircea Eliade. Seeing Blake as a prophet, visionary, and mystic, she repeatedly joins the issue of materialism vs. belief in the spirit; and we find *satori, maya, atma, karma* coming in for support on the "spirit" side, though the words are not to be found in Blake.

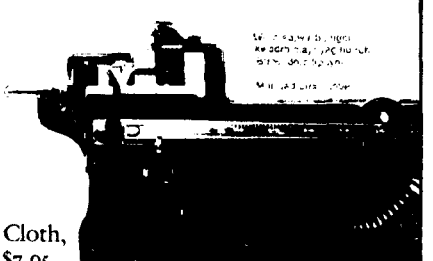
If we nevertheless look at the Job plates before "reading" them, we notice that they are divided between the static and the wildly active; we begin and end with a static tableau; near the center, a crescendo of energy. We note also the division into vertical levels and into central designs and marginal ones, central texts and marginal ones, unbroken texts and those divided, balanced, slanting, vertical. In reading, we see that the visually dominant text or design is often countered by a subordinate one. On plate 12, Job sleeps the sleep of death in the marginal design at the bottom even while, in the central design, he attends to the words of Elihu, who is pointing to the stars. Thus, though the Job plates have a simplicity of design approaching that of stained-glass windows, with the light often seeming to come from behind, over the horizon, the designs are supported by texts and countertexts and marginal details which demand to be "read" along with the designs.

As for the action, Satan's furious motion, unleashed by God, dominates plates 2, 3, 5, and 6—entering God's presence, leaving it (in a controlled and voluntary fall), smiting Job's sons and flocks or Job himself, and finally, falling. Job remains the largely motionless target or place of action. What the change in the book is, and what causes it, remains a problem. Perhaps the point is that God answers Job at all—that Job is enlightened by seeing that God is "mindful" of man, and that "his eyes are upon the ways of Man & he observeth all his goings" (plate 12). Kathleen Raine's thesis is that God in Blake's Job presents a human face. (Blake would add, a human form.) One of the fascinations of Blake's book, however, is in the separate yet mirroring

"Enormously intriguing... opens a window into the minds of both Zuckmayer and Barth which enlarges our understanding of both."
—Harvey G. Cox
The Divinity School, Harvard University

"Altogether charming and delightful... in many ways the most interesting of the Barth correspondence so far published. These letters will help shatter some wide-spread stereotypes about Barth's attitudes toward culture and shed light on some important theological themes in Barth."
—Donald Dayton
Membership Secretary, The Karl Barth Society

A Late Friendship
The Letters of Karl Barth and Carl Zuckmayer
Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley



Cloth, $7.95

At your bookstore, or write:
WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. 49503
288

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"identities" of Job, God, Satan. On plate 11, they seem to converge. Job lies on his back beneath a God/Satan stretched out above, facing him, his body in the coils of a serpent, his feet cloven, one hand pointing to the Tables of the Law above, one hand to hell beneath (where devils try to drag Job down by loins and feet)—his face almost the image of Job's. In the other plates, Satan is clearly distinguished from both God and Job, who resemble each other. Here the three primary figures of the drama become two, and image or confront each other in the pit. Although it is a dream—"In dreams thou affrightest me with visions"—this plate offers more support than any other for S. Foster Damon's assertion that in Blake's Job all takes place in Job' mind. Plate 11 is the active center on which the 22 plates of Job turn. It is not only the most terrifying of Job's visions but the one in which Job affirms his belief: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Furthermore, it prophesies: "Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light & his Ministers into Ministers of Righteousness." Perhaps we ought to speak of "transformations" rather than "change" in Blake's Job.

For Blake "the two contrary states of the human soul" are night and day. His Job engravings are a night vision. We begin, in plate 1, with the sun setting (it is still setting in plates 6 and 7), and pass through a long night to end in the coming of day, where one of the planets attending the moon may be Lucifer become "an Angel of Light." Job's faith has survived his night vision of death, but it is not yet full day: it is sunrise. For Blake, man sees God as either the Accuser or Forgiver of Sin. He is himself born as one and must become the other. In Blake's Job engravings, the Accuser/Affrighter is cast out, God the Creator is praised, and the Forgiver of Sins is still expected (though he may be present as the "bright and morning star" of Revelation). Jehovah in Blake's Job has not yet become Jesus (as he did earlier, in Blake's *Jerusalem*), but plate 17 repeats, as Raine says, "the complete teaching of the Gospel of St. John upon the identity of the Father and the Son." And in plate 16, where Satan falls, an infant haloed head in the light surrounding God signifies God's intention to incarnate himself—so Raine is convinced. The book of Job as Blake illuminates it continually points to what is to come: Jesus and the forgiveness of sins. But the dominant texts and designs are faithful to the Book of Job in the Old Testament.

The real force of *The Human Face of God*—its most concentrated, vigorous order—comes at the end, in "Blake's Job and Jung's Job," where Ms. Raine has brought together poet Blake and philosopher Jung. Jung abundantly respects the force of images, of the unconscious, and of poets; and his *Answer to Job* is a vision strong enough to stand beside Blake's. Each sees Blake in the light of a whole system of belief. Put side by side, their views sometimes accord, sometimes clash, but Ms. Raine weighs them evenly:

> While Blake sees the central issue of the Book of Job as being Job's self-righteousness, his refusal to understand that the living God is neither moral nor immoral, Jung sees the amoral God of the Old Testament as an archaic, rudimentary, undeveloped concept. Blake condemns Plato for his moralism; Jung [praises it] as an advance in human consciousness (p. 276).
>
> Blake's total rejection of a moral religion is the religion of the mystics, and doubtless it is the ultimate truth. Blake's Jesus . . . comes to end the moral law by the law of love. [But]

America's Poland?

. . . In El Salvador it is the men with the guns, and with the philosophy of guns, who hold power. The Reagan administration's response is to supply more guns. The rationale was provided by Assistant Secretary of State Thomas O. Enders. "If after Nicaragua, El Salvador is captured by a violent minority, who in Central America would not live in fear?" Would it be profitable to ask Mr. Enders who, if not a violent minority, is *now* governing El Salvador? Or governing its neighbor Guatemala, where the administration has repeatedly tried to funnel millions of dollars in aid to one of the world's bloodiest governments? . . .

A balanced American policy toward Central America would include: (1) maintaining pressure against arms deliveries to the Salvadoran guerrillas; (2) refusing further arms and military training to the Salvadoran government until it eliminates the terror that makes a mockery of democratic claims and economic reforms; (3) disavowing all support for a regime as brutal and deadly as the Guatemalan; and (4) taking a cautious but measured stance toward the Nicaraguan revolution. . . .

Commonweal, February 26, 1982

6 months for $9

OFFER FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS ONLY

COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016

Please send the next 6 months of *Commonweal* to:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

☐ **I prefer a full year subscription at $24.** 2/11/83

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whether the world . . . can yet dispense with the moral code is a matter upon which Jung might be a better judge than Blake (p. 277).

Finally, Kathleen Raine finds Jung's assertion that "Job stands morally higher than Yahweh . . . the creature has surpassed the creator," a "Faustian flourish."

If Blake and Jung see two different faces of God, both are indubitably "Human." Kathleen Raine agrees with Blake (and I think Jung) that it could not be otherwise. In Blake's "Auguries of Innocence,"

God Appears & God is Light
To those poor Souls who dwell in Night
But does a Human Form Display
To those who Dwell in Realms of day.

Victory over bitterness

THE COLOR PURPLE

Alice Walker

Harcourt Brace Jaovanovich, $11.95, 245 pp.

Elizabeth Bartelme

IN THIS arresting and touching novel, Alice Walker creates a woman so believable, so lovable, that Celie, the downtrodden, semi-literate, rural black woman joins a select company of fictional women whom it is impossible to forget.

Raped at fourteen by the man she believes to be her father and to whom she eventually bears two children who are taken from her, Celie is married off to Albert, Mr. _____, as she calls him. Taking along her pretty little sister Nettie, Celie becomes a household slave. Albert beats her, forces himself upon her, refuses even to buy her a decent dress. When he begins to look appreciatively at Nettie, Celie panics and persuades the younger girl to run away. Nettie disappears and is lost to Celie.

In the absence of human warmth, Celie turns to God, pouring out her heart in one letter after another, the difficult form in which the book is written. Everything that happens to her is recorded and commented on, Albert's cruelty, the hopelessness of Celie's life. Then Shug Avery turns up, the only woman Albert had ever wanted to marry, blues singer of some presence and a warm heart. With her arrival, Celie begins to thaw and to know what it is like to love another person. Shug is wild and wicked and delightful. She stands up to Albert and tells him what's what. She persuades him to buy Celie a new dress and to let Celie come and hear her sing. Shug takes the place of Celie's mother, sister, lover, and she gets the onus of Albert's presence off Celie, opening her own bed to him once again. Because of Shug, Celie begins to take tentative steps toward self-realization, and even discovers a talent for making pants, fancy pants, that enables her to start her own business.

Alice Walker is, of course, a feminist and she understands well the circumstances that force a woman into an anti-man stance. Her gallery of women are living examples of man's inhumanity to women: Sophia, wife of Harpo, Albert's eldest son, who only wanting to be herself and not the fantasy woman Harpo thinks she ought to be, changes from a warm, happy woman to a bitter paranoic who only wants to get through her life without killing anyone. Mary Alice, "Squeak," who takes Sophia's place

REVIEWERS

MARIE AUGUSTA NEAL, S.N.D., *on sabbatical from Emmanuel College in Boston, is Research Associate in the Women's Studies in Religion Program at Harvard.*

FATHER CLYDE F. CREWS *chairs the department of theology at Louisville's Bellarmine College.*

LEONARD W. DEEN *teaches English at Queens College in the City University of New York. His* Conversing in Paradise, *on identity as community in Blake, will be published in the spring by the University of Missouri.*

ELIZABETH BARTELME *is an editor who also teaches English at Hofstra University.*

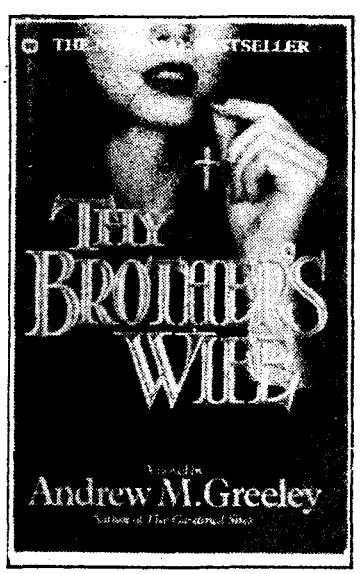
"Andrew Greeley's novel makes strong statements about important matters—love, mortality, power, and human frailty under the pressure of animal drives....His is a novel of electrifications."

—The New York Times Book Review

"The book is never dull . . . it's nice to have somebody as lively as Greeley on the usually staid Catholic scene."
—National Catholic Reporter

"His novels are interesting, particularly on the church and its members . . . he knows how priests and their parishes work, how ward bosses get things done and how contemporary Catholics think. All this along with narrative energy."
—Boston Globe

"Father Greeley never oversteps the bounds of probability or good taste. In fact, so moving is the final scene . . . more than one reader will find a moistness around the eyes as I did."
—King Features Syndicate



More than five months on national bestseller lists.
Finally in paperback.

A Bernard Geis Associates Book

WARNER BOOKS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with Harpo when the latter is jailed for sassing the mayor's wife (white), and who allows her uncle, the warden to rape her in exchange for Sophia's freedom. Even Shug, the indomitable, has her share of suffering at men's hands. Only Nettie (who turns up first in letters that Albert has hidden from Celie; then in person with her missionary husband and Celie's lost children) seems to have escaped the general mayhem, and she is a curiously colorless character. Her letters, by comparison with Celie's, are pedantic, her nature prim. The other women leap out of the book, Nettie stays safely within its confines, as does her husband, Samuel.

But Alice Walker is too much of an artist to write a purely political novel, and so her feminist impulse does not prevent her from allowing her characters, women and men, to grow and change. The men in her story lead miserable lives, too, but like their women they begin to come to terms with what life doles out to them, and accept it. And the women turn from rage to acceptance as well. One of the best scenes in the book occurs as Mr. _____ and Celie sit sewing on the front porch, old now and calm together, and talking about the lessons life has taught them. Albert tells her he has learned to wonder, to wonder about all the things that happen and "the more I wonder, he say, the more I love.

"And people start to love you back, I bet, I say.

"They do, he say, surprise. Harpo seem to love me. Sophia and the children . . ."

They go on sewing and talking and waiting for Shug to come home, and Celie says to herself, "If she come, I be happy. If she don't, I be content.

"And then I figure this the lesson I was supposed to learn."

And so bitterness leaches out into a hard-won wisdom, and the lively characters of Alice Walker's invention become human beings with a life of their own. She is a remarkable novelist, sometimes compared to Toni Morrison, but with a strong, individual voice and vision of her own, and a delicious humor that pervades the book and tempers the harshness of the lives of its people.

Opening with a dedication to the Spirit, the novel ends with a postscript: "I thank everybody in this book for coming. A. W., author and medium." This reader's thanks to the medium; may she call up hosts in the future.

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 66)

Then again, he may have a real formula for peace. All that Israel must do is forget the past, forget history, forget the experiences of the Jewish people in medieval Europe, in Nazi Germany, murder at Lod, the slaughter at the Olympic Games, the attack at Maalot and the world will live in peace.

(RABBI) ROBERT M. BENJAMIN

The author replies:

I am sorry if my metaphor about the Romans in Jesus's time and the present situation in the Holy Land offended Rabbi Benjamin. Political analogies are seldom completely accurate. I am afraid, however, that this one cuts too close to the bone for comfort. The Israelis are presently occupying and threatening to annex the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the Palestinians I talked to whose territory is being occupied are no less resentful than the Jews must have been in the time of Jesus. This is a situation that has to disturb anyone who cares for the security and future of Israel, as Rabbi Benjamin obviously does; it certainly disturbs me, and it also disturbs many Jews in Israel. As I said in my article, today "the Jews are the Romans, some willingly and some unwillingly. . . ." It is among the thousands of the unwilling in Israel who oppose the Begin policy of annexation that hope for the immediate future rests.

As I reported, I and the other journalists with whom I traveled to the Middle East had extended interviews with all kinds of political and religious leaders there, from Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan, representatives of the PLO, and spokesmen for the Begin administration as well as the opposition Labor party, to President Mubarak of Egypt, to name just a few. Our findings can hardly be dismissed as "a tourist's view."

I certainly do not think that Israel must forget about history, about the past, about the Holocaust, as Rabbi Benjamin suggests. But the central problem in the Middle East is two-edged: somehow the security of Israel must be assured and at the same time the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for a homeland of their own must be satisfied. As I tried to make clear in my article, that is going to require compromise by all parties concerned — compromise that will inevitably leave many on each side unhappy. Rabbi Benjamin, I fear, will be numbered among them.

JAMES O'GARA

Third fundamentalism

Tampa, Fla.

To the Editors: When the issue containing the essays on fundamentalism [Oct. 22] arrived I happened to be reading again the letter of St. Pius X condemning modernism and the modernists *(Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, 1907). The letter exhibits a third variety of fundamentalism, one peculiar to the modern bureaucratic church, the fundamentalism of office and office-holder, an ecclesiastical positivism that matches its biblical and scientific counterparts in myopia but which, for half a century in Roman Catholicism, was far more effective in political terms and, it seems to me, far more vicious. Dr. Anne Brennan's admirable comparison by contrast of the Christian biblicists and scientific humanists could easily be extended to include this Catholic party.

Should we not admit that the three possess a significant insight into the plight of modern consciousness, with its deep wounds? Dr. Brennan correctly states the nature of the would—it is the as yet unhealed break between *mythos* and *logos*, between our belief and critical reflection. The biblical, the ecclesiastical,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the secularist fundamentalists know that historical consciousness opens a pit before the religious person. Once the immediate truth and value of one's beliefs are put under critical and systematic inquiry, once the Bible and the pope are questioned seriously, where is there an end? The fear is that there is no end; the questions outstrip our ability to answer them. As that saint of humanism, Walter Lippmann, put the issue in the persona of a fundamentalist. "Once you subject (the Bible) to the test of human reason you have denied the essence of its authority. You have made the finite understanding the judge of the infinite. You are then, in the historic meaning of the word, an unbeliever." If, as Dr. Brennan points out, a return to "the mythological security of the tribe" is unsavory and even impossible, what kind of advance is possible?

When one refuses the answers offered by Falwell, Pius X, and Lippmann, the question will in some sense leave one tribeless. Perhaps tribelessness is itself an advance. Or, perhaps we can hope for a second naiveté when we can live with the Christian story and Catholic community again in good intellectual conscience. But my suspicion is that the authoritarians — biblical, ecclesiastical, scientific — are correct: the pit will not close and the beast of unbelief is a permanent companion of the historically conscious religious person, for systematic doubt is a characteristic of contemporary intelligence.

The creationists' effort is an anachronism; they will lose as their fathers in the faith lost, ignominiously and decisively, at Dayton in 1925. But they, along with their counterparts, will remain. They are not an anachronism. They are a thoroughly modern phenomenon, possible only in a culture of the sort sketched by Dr. Brennan. We may disagree with their integration of the schizophrenic modern consciousness, but we cannot disagree with them on the issue, on its seriousness, and on the need for integration. Their very existence might even, on occasion (not too many, I trust, since such ponderings are so exhausting) prompt us to wonder about the theoretic adequacy and the wisdom of our own solutions. After all, we have failed notably to make ourselves clear to any of the three, whereas they have at least had the grace to make themselves perfectly clear to us.

WILLIAM M. SHEA
Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies
Department of Religious Studies
University of South Florida

Classified

RATES: 70¢ a word, one time; 66¢, three times; 63¢, six times; Classified payable with order; monthly in advance for more than three times.

Psychology of the Mystics

Joseph Marechal, S.J. Features and validity of the experience of God in Christian and non-Christian saints. Erudite classic. Remaining copies, library bound. $12 plus .86 postage. Magi Books, Inc. 33 Buckingham Dr. Albany, N.Y. 12208.

Religious Community

Considering Religious Life? Over 25? Founded to ransom slaves, our small community of men have grounded our lives and our work of liberation in fraternity, prayer, and the Bible for over 800 years. Write Fr. Bill Axe, The Trinitarian Friars, P.O. Box 5719, Baltimore, MD 21208; or call Collect (301) 484-2250.

Kirkridge Gathering

The Company at Kirkridge, a supportive network for contemporary Christians will meet March 4, 5, 6, 1983 at Mt. Saviour monastery, Elmira, N.Y. Dorothy Soelle will speak on Beyond Mere Obedience. Join us and become part of an ongoing group which is ecumenical in every dimension. For further information write Anthony Ciccariello, 520 W. Gray St., Elmira, N.Y. 14905.

Chesterton Review

Special introductory offer to *The Chesterton Review*. Free copy of Eric Gill or Christopher Dawson special issues for new subscribers. Subscription $12 per year. Write 1437 College Dr., Saskatoon, Canada S7N OW6.

Biblical Institute

Trinity College, Burlington, Vermont 05401. June 19-24. Luis Alonso-Schokel; Karl Donfried; William Holloday; Carolyn Osiek. Write: Sr. Miriam Ward.

Symposium

On the life and thought of Abraham Joshua Heschel. May 9-11, 1983. College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, Minnesota. Speakers will include: Bernard W. Anderson, Robert McAfee Brown, Samuel H. Dresner, Eva Fleischner, Edward K. Kaplan, Wolfe Kelman, John C. Merkle, Ursula Niebuhr, Fritz A. Rothschild. Further information write: Dr. John C. Merkle, Theology Dept., College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN 56374.

Graduate Program

We invite you to consider our exciting Graduate Program. In a context of the history of philosophy we reflect upon the creative tension between being and value, theory and practice. Barth (Marxism), Bartlett (Epistemology, Philosophy of Science) Blackwell (Philosophy of Science, History of Greek Philosophy) Carlson (Analytic Philosophy, Ethics) Charron (Analytic Philosophy, History of Modern Philosophy), Childress (Thomism, Metaphysics), Collins (History of Modern Philosophy), Doyle (Metaphysics, History of Medieval Philosophy), Ermatinger (History of Medieval Philosophy, Epistemology), Eslick (Process Philosophy, Plato), Kavanaugh (Critical Social Theory, Philosophy of Psychology), Marsh (Phenomenology, Critical Social Thought), Punzo (Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy), Reagan (Aesthetics, History of Greek Philosophy), Treloar (Epistemology, Thomism). Direct inquiries to Professor Marianne Childress, Chairperson, Dept. of Philosophy, St. Louis University, 221 N. Grand, St. Louis, MO 63103.

Literary Services

Manuscript evaluations — literary services. Dale Roberts, P.O. Box 6151, Chattanooga, TN 37401.

"The ancient languages are the scabbard which holds the mind's sword" (Goethe).

SUMMER LANGUAGE PROGRAM

BIBLICAL GREEK AND HEBREW ARE ALIVE AND WELL AT PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
June 6 – July 29

WRITE: **Director**
Summer Language Program
Princeton Theological Seminary
CN821
Princeton, N.J. 08540

Princeton Theological Seminary admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin, without regard to sex or handicap.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JOURNEYS IN FAITH

Reflections on the sixties and seventies from some of today's best-known religious leaders—they provide hope for the uncertain eighties.

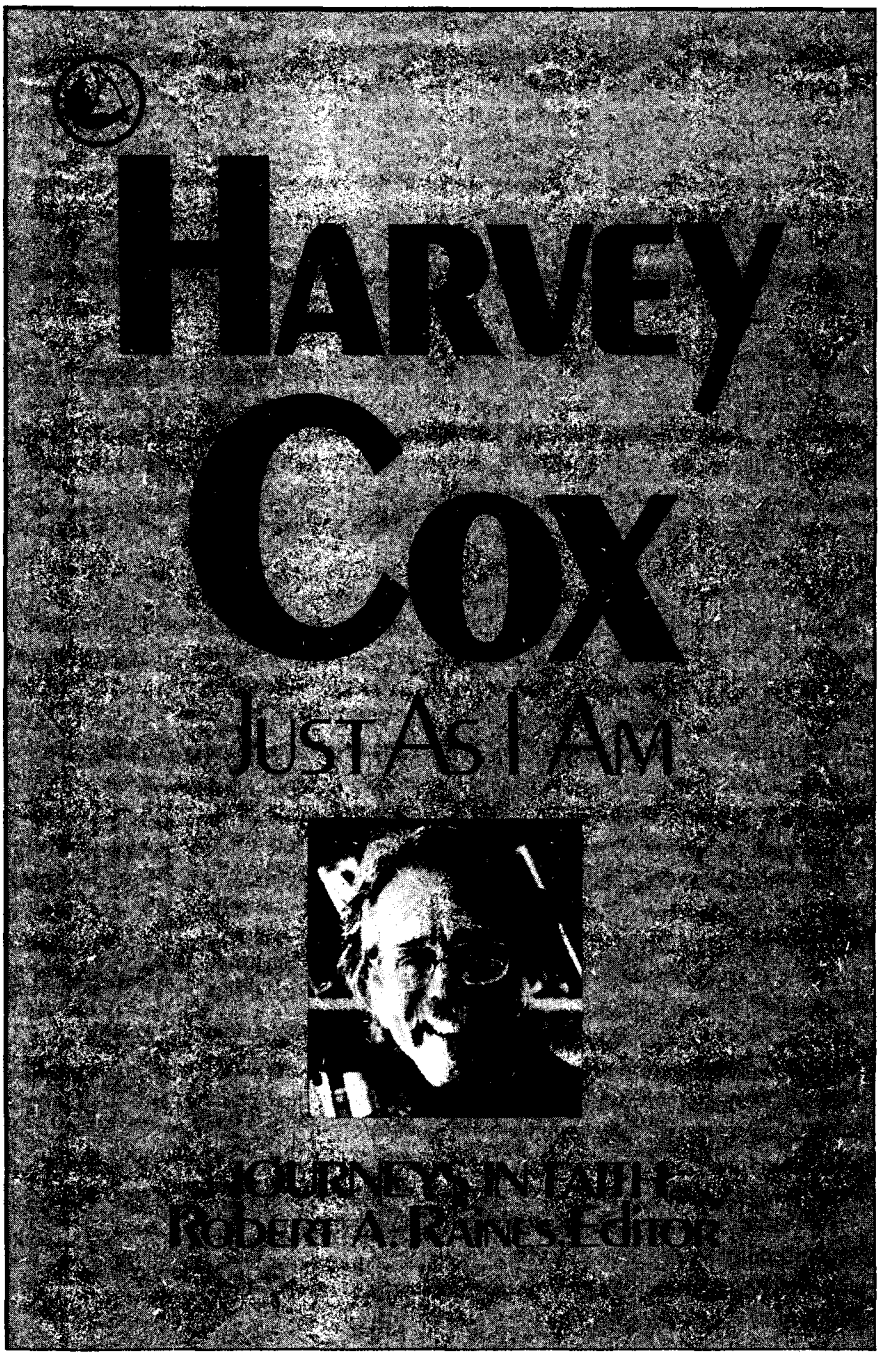
NEW—

Just As I Am

by Harvey Cox

Harvey Cox traces his controversial career as a minister/activist in warmly evocative tones and in a variety of literary modes. Throughout, he points to his Baptist roots as the driving force behind his dedication to the civil rights and peace movements.

Cox's disarmingly communicative writing will rivet your attention. His refreshingly nonpolemical, carefully reasoned views openly reflect his earnestness and sense of mission. This is one faith journey that will easily reach out to persons of all theological or political persuasions. $10.95



Other Journeys In Faith:

My Soul Looks Back
by James H. Cone $9.95

All God's Children
by Tilden Edwards $9.95

A Simplicity of Faith
by William Stringfellow $9.95

Ten Commandments for the Long Haul
by Daniel Berrigan $9.95

Creative Dislocation—The Movement of Grace
by Robert McAfee Brown $7.95

Disputed Questions
by Rosemary Radford Ruether $9.95

By Way of Response
by Martin E. Marty $7.95

Speech, Silence, Action
by Virginia Ramey Mollenkott $7.95

God's Presence in My Life
by Edward W. Bauman $7.95

Hope Is an Open Door
by Mary Luke Tobin $7.95

Order from your local bookstore or

Abingdon Press

201 Eighth Ave., So., Box 801, Nashville, TN 37202

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED